

# Spinoza on Knowledge, Freedom and Education.

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### ABSTRACT

This thesis, through an examination of the Philosophy of Spinoza, represents a critique of the conception of freedom embodied in recent philosophy of education and the education system. In Chapter 1 I show that for Spinoza man's good is to realise his own nature; and this lies in becoming free, where we transcend our spatio-temporal circumstances. I distinguish between relative and absolute freedom. The former is where we become more free within the here and now. The latter involves participation in a realm that is untouched by the spatio-temporal. We can be free with respect to the content of our states and with respect to their acquisition. This is achieved through knowledge as the constitutive expression of freedom. In Chapter 2 I show in general terms what this involves. We go beyond the first stage of knowledge to Reason and Intuition. I also show the connection between freedom and eternity. In Chapter 3 I propose that we must understand Nature in Mechanistic and Organic terms if we are to view it from no particular standpoint and that we need to understand exactly how things are placed within nature. We must acquire a methodology to help us form ideas for ourselves. In Chapter 4 I explain that freedom must be realised through understanding ourselves as part of Nature and we must form affects that lift us out of the common order and which enable us to be more free within the common order. In chapter 5 I look at some implications for education of Spinoza's ideas: its neglect for the imagination, the light it throws on writings on Autonomy, the importance of critical thinking and the importance of a Spinozan education in putting the here and now in a correct balance with the eternal.

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## **PREFACE**

*“We conceive things as actual in two ways: either in so far as we conceive them to exist in relation to a certain time and place, or insofar as we conceive them to be contained in God and to follow from the necessity of the divine nature. But the things we conceive in the second way as true or real, we conceive under a species of eternity” (E5p29s).*

*“Footfalls echo in the memory  
Down the passage which we did not take  
Towards the door we never opened  
Into the rose-garden.”*

----- T. S. Eliot. *Burnt Norton*.

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If, in what follows, I have not made adequate use of the analysis given to me by the above, then I might express regret but that would not be a Spinozistic response. In so far as any blame for the account which unfolds is consistent with Spinoza's philosophy then it must fall entirely on myself.

## **REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS**

The following abbreviations are used:

Ethics	E
Tractatus on the Emendation of the Intellect	TdIE
The Short Treatise	ST
Principles of Philosophy of Descartes	PP
Metaphysical Thoughts	CM
Correspondence of Spinoza	EP
Political Treatise	PT
Theologico-Political Treatise	TPT

With reference to the Ethics the following are used:

P= Proposition

C= Corollary

S= Scholium

L= Lemma

A= Axiom

Aff= Affects

Exp= Explanation

D= Definitions at the start of the Ethics chapters

Def= Definition

Dem= Demonstration

App= Appendix

### **EXAMPLES**

E3p23s= Ethics Book 3 Proposition 23 Scholium.

TPT V, 79= Theologico-Political Treatise Chapter V page 79.

PT IV, 310= Political Treatise Chapter IV page 310.

TdIEs94= TdIE section 94.

ST 2, V = Short Treatise Part Two Chapter five.

EP. V = Letter V.

PP 1, p4s= Principles of Philosophy of Descartes, Part 1 proposition 4 Scholium.

CM 1/277/20 = Metaphysical Thoughts.

With reference to this thesis:

(Ch p. ) = Refer to the designated chapter and page within this thesis for further comment.

(Appendix. p) = Refer to the Appendix within this thesis for further comment.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This thesis is a critique of contemporary education and influential elements in the philosophy of education. I will show that the conception of freedom under the name of autonomy is an impoverished one and reflects as well as influences an education system that undermines true freedom.

Although Spinoza did not write directly on education his conception of freedom and knowledge offers a more inspiring vision of what education might achieve than our current system.

While the overall goal of this thesis is to reveal some shortcomings in the philosophy of education the first four chapters deal with the philosophy of Spinoza. This however has been set in a context which will of itself show what an education system ought to be achieving. Space does not permit a detailed assessment of Spinoza's philosophy and conclusive proof of his contentions is not possible within the confines of this thesis. I will expound those elements of his philosophy which are relevant to the matter at hand showing that it has been subject to differing interpretations. Some elements that could not be accommodated within the main thesis have been placed in an appendix. I present a summary of the traits of the free person below (Ch5, p. 131). This draws together some of the threads of the preceding chapters but may also be read first as a guide to what ensues.

Spinoza describes the state of blessedness and the techniques to achieve it. A Spinozan education would have as its aim the development of a state of freedom that takes one out of what he calls the common order, of a realm where one's thoughts and affective states are determined by one's particular standpoint in the here and now. One can form thoughts and affects which transcend any such determination and reach eternity.

In chapter 1 I distinguish between absolute and relative freedom. This distinction is pursued in the remaining chapters of the thesis. Absolute freedom is a state of complete independence of the common order. However, as finite beings we live in the spatio-temporal world and a Spinozan education does not aim for a Buddhist retreat. One can become more or less free within this common order. This will involve two elements: first if one's interactions with events and other people are integrated within principles which transcend space and time; secondly where one has played a part in acquiring one's ideas and affects. This gives one another perspective within which this thesis will be conducted. A person can attain freedom if in content his states transcend his particular standpoint **and** if he has acquired them for himself. Spinoza would not consider that a person could be free at all if these states were not self-acquired, although there are degrees to which this control can be exercised. The Spinozan educated person will be energetic whilst directing his dynamism into the right channels. In this respect the approach is not dissimilar in outline to the concept of autonomy where the part dealing with autos refers to the origination of states and nomos with the content. But this concept as expounded in philosophy of education is limited and limiting. It does not offer people a way forward from their encultured selves. In the first chapter I also show that this freedom can only be attained through reason. The latter is not a means to the former but its constitutive expression. To

develop reason is to become free and to understand Spinoza's conception of reason and intuition is the only way to understand the free state. It is the knowledge of God which sets one free. (Many commentators have identified Spinoza's concept of God with the whole of Nature. Where appropriate I use the latter terminology in the thesis).

In Chapter 2 I show that one becomes free by understanding universal and eternal principles which give the essence of Nature. One acquires these states by understanding the grounds for them. I contrast this with what Spinoza calls the Imagination where one is not in control of one's states and where in content they reflect one's position in the here and now. I show how through the integration of reason and imagination one can have greater freedom within the common order and then show how Spinoza's conception of intuition and eternity advances this free state further.

In Chapter 3 I set out some of the content of the principles and concepts that are true for all time. I also show that freedom of control can be taken to a higher stage through the adoption and employment by the free person of a methodology to attain ideas.

In Chapter 4 on the affects I show what it is to know oneself from the standpoint of eternity. Self-knowledge is a necessary condition for full freedom and I explain why people are unfree in their affective lives. The way out of this is the development of affects which transcend one's encultured position by governing one's interactions within the common order by principles. I also show how freedom of control can be further enhanced if one uses for oneself methods to overcome one's passive states and develop the active ones.

In the final chapter I look at some conceptions of education in recent philosophy of education, pointing out in the light of the discussion their limited conception of freedom. I also show through Warnock that one major limitation of a Spinozan education is its neglect of the imagination. I also point out that a Spinozan education can benefit all. Everyone within the limits of their capacities can become freer than they are. As I show in Chapter 1 there are degrees and kinds of freedom; and even though many people will not be capable of having the understanding of Nature that, let us say, Spinoza had, they can be more independent in their beliefs and affects than at present.

I conclude with highlighting a central problem within an education system. How much of one's life should one devote to transcendent issues and how much to the concerns of the here and now? The current education system is geared to the latter: some may say to the cult of consumerism, where people are only concerned to obtain consumer goods, and for which getting a job and vocational education are just means to this end. Unfortunately much current philosophy of education reinforces this as it offers a conception of freedom where one is placed in a position to choose one's ends but within the context where these are formed by the culture and sub-culture one is born into. The language of freedom has been devalued by advertisements which tell one that Gas puts you in control, where frozen foods sets you free. Educationalists

may recoil from this but can they disclaim responsibility for this when their conception is equally a devalued one? The current system is at one extreme of this divide: the extreme of unfreedom. A Buddhist retreat would be at the other extreme, denying the importance of being in the world dealing with issues as they arise. As the Ethics proceeds to the final chapter one can see that the direction is towards the transcendent. My contention is that education must not neglect the exigencies of living within the world but should place much less emphasis on this.

In a Spinozan education we would develop freedom via self-activity (Ch1, pp. 21-23) and the understanding of eternal contents, the aim of the former being to achieve the latter. But as we are more active in forming adequate ideas so through eternal ideas we enhance this power of acting, although in themselves these ideas are essential for complete transcendence. One's activity can be constrained by the common order, one's spatio-temporal circumstances, but qua activity it transcends this order. This is because it is the expression in man, through the conatus, of Nature's activity as *Naturans* – Nature actively creating herself and deploying her powers (Appendix, p. 148 – Scruton). Wherever I am active (in reflexive thought, forming ideas and affects, seeking ends, etc.), there I manifest freedom. It is exhibited in producing grounds for one's ideas (Ch2, pp. 52ff). It is also developed in the adoption of a methodology to generate ideas (Ch3, p. 74f) and to alter affects (Ch4, pp. 109ff). I also show (Ch4, p. 86) that this self-activity is expressed in the drive to pursue and maintain ends. The affects are changes in this conatus as life-force, enhancing or diminishing it. We exist as will to power dynamically projecting our being, thrusting back all that resists our extension: a power that sets us apart from the common order which can and does limit our inherent power of relating ourselves reflexively towards our circumstances. That man qua active being can't but be active does not diminish the transcendence that this involves and thus Spinoza's determinism is consistent with his account of freedom (Ch1, pp. 31ff). Throughout this thesis I show that the correct employment of this activity lies in the formation of ideas and affects which, in content, transcend the common order. It is through the development of reason that this is achieved. Spinoza rejects free-will but can advocate freedom as this depends on the **kind** of cause that determines one's states. If the determining cause lies in the common order then one is unfree (Ch2, pp. 44ff, Ch4, p. 88). If the determining cause lies in reason one is free. A large part of the chapters which follow detail what is involved in being governed by reason and how this liberates.

Spinoza's conception of freedom as transcendence is far from the conception embodied in our education system and much philosophy of education. But as long as we live in a society where consumption is predominant the education system is bound to be corrupted by this. Where the change to the better can come from is difficult to see. Can the education system be the source of this? This would itself require a whole thesis to deal with. But so long as its conception of freedom remains impoverished then change will not occur. Spinoza offers to each individual the promise of a way forward even if the system they operate in is alien to this task.

## **CHAPTER 1 - FREEDOM**

### **INTRODUCTION**

For Spinoza man's highest good and the aim of education lies in the attainment of freedom. This aim must be set within an overarching aim. The fundamental aim of a Spinozan education would be to enable people to realise their **own** nature – to be in touch with their true selves. This is only attained when our beliefs and affects are independent of our particular circumstances. I will consider the overarching aim in sections 1 and 2. It rests on an understanding of the good which has: that one's good is to attain one's **own** ends and that this involves self-realisation. An egoist would accept that one's aim is to do the best for oneself without necessarily accepting this lies in realising one's nature. It could rest in following one's urges.

In Section 1 I will consider how Spinoza reaches the conclusion that actualising one's own nature is the good for man and a central aim of educators. In Section 2 I shall consider the implications of the egoism involved in this conception of the good and how it consists in the realisation of potential. In Section 3 I show that freedom forms the substantive good that education must develop. Even if one accepts that good rests in realising one's **own** potential one may not accept that this comprises freedom. In Section 4 I look at the relation between freedom and reason. In Section 5 I look at the implications of determinism for Spinoza's view. In Section 6 I will look at how the value of freedom may be established.

The theme of this chapter is to show that educators must place freedom at the centre of their concerns and this can only be achieved through the development of knowledge. The product of a Spinozan education will be concerned to promote his **own** nature and the more free he is the more successful he and the education system will have been in attaining his central end.

## **1. THE CONATUS**

### **SELF-REALISATION**

We can understand Spinoza to be claiming that man's good and the aim of education is to enable people to actualise their nature. The foundation for this claim is that everyone is trying to actualise their being and to prevent this would frustrate an inherent tendency. Before looking at the ethical conclusion we must examine the metaphysical premise as embodied in his theory of the conatus: "From the given essence of each thing some things necessarily follow, and things are able to produce nothing but what follows necessarily from their determinate nature" (E3p7Dem). So all things seek out what promotes their nature. Spinoza agrees that some people do not realise their being but this is due to external factors. He assumes that people are attempting in everything they do to make the best for themselves. But, it may be objected, the activity of hoarding is certainly something people do, yet it hardly seems to be a way in which they can expect to realise themselves. However, Spinoza would say that people are trying to do so, but get deflected into not trying. According

to G. H. R. Parkinson, we are dealing with a metaphysical statement (1975, p. 17); and examples of pupils who don't endeavour to actualise their nature would not count against the conatus. J. Bennett says (1984, p. 295) Spinoza has not provided the framework for **trying** to preserve one's being. He pretends he has done when he talks of what we imagine (E3p12).

The doctrine goes beyond the thesis that everything I do is helpful to me, to the claim that if something would be helpful to me I shall do it (Bennett 1984, p. 299) (Appendix p. 144). Bennett's first statement means that if x does something he does it because he thinks it is in his interests. But the expansionary doctrine asserts that people will search out whatever they think serves their interests. In this latter case some people may not do much seeking. Spinoza would say that this is because they are prevented by external circumstances as from their essence they are set on a course of expansion. The person who spends most of his time watching soap operas is not doing very much 'endeavouring' compared to one forming adequate ideas and as some acquire more than others so some are persevering in their being, realising themselves, more than others. This distinction is pertinent in an educational context where we know that some students make more of an attempt to do the best for themselves than others. Educators are dealing with centres of activity struggling for actualisation. Where there is inactivity this has been dulled by external circumstances and the task would be to liberate pupil's inherent tendencies. We can cite J. S. Mill: "What more or better can be said of any condition of human affairs than that it brings human beings themselves nearer to the best thing they can be or what worse can be said of any obstruction to good than that it prevents this?" (1947, Ch3, p. 121).

Self-realisation is an objective conception. C. Taylor (1991, p. 17) rightly rejects the liberalism of neutrality, where people attain their current desires as in a suburban existence. This is not Spinoza's conception either. In aiming for self-realisation there is the notion of what human beings are like (Ibid p. 39). Self-realisation only makes sense against a background of what is important (Ibid p. 39). I can define my identity only against the background of what matters, which for Spinoza means being free through a knowledge of Nature. This contrasts with the position of D. E. Cooper (Ch5, p. 118). Spinoza states that the more one seeks one's advantage the more virtuous one is. Good is synonymous with utility (E4p20). For Spinoza man's utility consists in whatever enables him to develop his powers and attain the highest perfection of which his nature is capable (R. A. Duff, 1903, pp. 120-124). Spinoza does say that good is consciousness of pleasure; but Spinoza's account is consistent as pleasure is defined as a transition to a higher stage of perfection. He also says that good is what satisfies desire and this may lead one to conclude that the aim of education would be to help people attain their wants. But Spinoza rightly concludes that all desires are not of the same value and so the good which satisfies one desire has not the same value as that which ministers to another. The good as what satisfies desires is transformed into the true good relative to man's advantage as a whole. When Spinoza claims that we judge that a thing is good because we desire it, he is making a point that we are not determined by future good but by desires caused by antecedent factors. He says that desire is a consequence of the belief that something is good (ST 2, 111). In E4p17s he does not think that one can read off the goodness of things from our desires and allows that there is a standpoint, freedom, from which

we may evaluate our desires. Although educators must respect the desire to actualise oneself it does not follow that we must accept whatever ends pupils come to the system with.

But Spinoza's thesis is that what is good is not independent of our nature. Educators must not impose upon people that which is not suited to their nature. Spinoza (Ch4, p. 96) thought that asceticism was contrary to man's nature so a puritan education would be contrary to man's good. Spinoza's philosophy does not involve a rejection of worldly values so a monastic education would also be contrary to one's nature.

Also Spinoza says that people will not have realised their nature unless they see those activities as important to them: "...we shall easily see what the difference is between a man who is led only by an affect, or by opinion, and one who is led by reason. For the former...does those things he is most ignorant of, whereas the latter complies with no one's wishes but his own, and does only those things he knows to be the most important in life...Hence, I call the former a slave, but the latter, a free man"(E4p66s). "Man's lack of power to moderate and restrain the affects I call Bondage. For the man who is subject to affects is under control, not of himself, but of fortune, in whose power he so greatly is that often, though he sees the better for himself, he is still forced to follow the worse"(E4 Pref). We will not just regulate our life by objective principles; we will be committed to them and will wish to be motivated by them. To resent conforming to these standards means one is led by things outside of oneself even though one may be governed by principles that are eternal. One is placing an attitudinal condition on self-realisation as its necessary condition (H. G. Frankfurt 1982, pp. 81-95). We have an ascent from a self that is no more than the locus of individual desires that move it to a higher self that forms and acts upon integrated import-attributing desires (Ch5, p. 114). Kleptomaniacs are constrained as they are unable to govern their actions on the basis of their value systems. It is the difference between someone who thinks it is important not to steal and someone who would regard stealing as alien to his character. Taylor (1975 p. 15) expresses this idea well: "To talk about the realisation of a self here is to say that the adequate human life would not just be a fulfilment of an idea...independently of the subject...Rather this life must have the added dimension that the subject can recognise it as his own, as having unfolded within him". So all are striving to realise themselves and this is to do what is important to one and to recognise this.

#### PROOF THAT WE MUST VALUE THIS CONATUS

Spinoza says that the endeavour for self-preservation is the foundation of value: "No virtue can be conceived prior to this...the striving to preserve oneself"(E4p22). E. Curley (1973b, p. 371) suggests that Spinoza is not interested in telling people to seek to preserve their being as they are necessarily doing it. I do not agree with Curley. I have shown that the doctrine is expansionary and not everyone will be trying to enhance their being in the way implied: "The force by which a man perseveres in existing is limited...by the power of external causes" (E4p3). Not all pupils will be rushing home to their studies to enhance their understanding of Nature. In a later work Curley (1988, p. 115) does include an expansionary element in his account of the conatus.



I will show that recommending people to expand their being is consistent with determinism (Ch1, p. 28). Of itself this may provide encouragement but more will be needed to encourage a drive that may be dulled by circumstance (Ch4, p. 109). People may be so obsessed with certain matters that they can't direct their energies to their own realisation.

First the following argument (related to Moore's 'naturalistic fallacy'): If it is meaningful to ask whether actualising one's potential is good then it is not self-contradictory to deny this definition; and hence the possibility exists of a living thing whose potentialities are actualised without the achievement of good. This argument is not correct as to require that definitions be tautologies is to make them useless. If all genuine definitions are tautologies then no definition can tell us something new.

Spinoza says in the preface to E4 that good and bad will be applied only relatively, which means that what is good can't be independent of the preservation of my being. It is not an ideal outside human nature. If something does not affect the human realisation of goals there will be no ground for putting a value on it. I agree with this. To say that counting the number of grains of sand is of value would make no sense unless this is some use to us. There is no point in talking about a particular type of good life in so far as it is not attainable by beings with our capabilities. We do not say weed killer is good for weeds but we do say it is good for lawns, showing that through this concept we relate an event to the thing it impinges on. Thus from an analysis of the concept of good we can see some reason for accepting the goal of helping pupils to realise their natures.

Curley (1979b, pp. 366-371) suggests that Spinoza shows that this way of life is good because reason demands nothing contrary to one's being. It is a familiar proposition in ethics that ought presupposes can. But to say that acts contrary to our being can't be obligatory does not entail that we ought to promote our being. All that is being said is that if something is valuable we must be able to pursue it. Curley suggests we add that some way of acting is obligatory. Then we add that self-preservation is the only way to act. Self-preservation is then obligatory. Spinoza does use the language of obligation but not in a sense which implies freedom to do otherwise at the time. For Spinoza, to say a man's own reason dictates a certain action to him is to say that he has an adequate idea of his own interest and sees that the action is the necessary means to it. Since men necessarily do what they think to be in their own best interests it follows that they are bound to do the action. We may also say that man is obliged by the dictates of reason to do something even when his own reason does not dictate it and he feels no inclination to do the action. To say that A is bound or obliged to do x means that x is the necessary means to the true welfare of A even if A is causally determined to do something other than x.

A further argument consistent with Spinoza's view is as follows. Living things necessarily seek goals: "By the end for the sake of which we do something I understand appetite" (E4D7); "And appetite is the very essence of man, in so far as it is determined to do what promotes his preservation" (E3DefAff1Exp). End directed behaviour is necessitated by the fact that a being is a living thing. This is because a living thing has alternative possibilities and since the consequences of it

attaining or failing to attain ends make a difference to its existence, it is a being that must act for ends. A living thing could not exist as a living thing if it did not pursue ends. It follows from this that because it is trying to preserve its own existence what happens to it matters to it: "From the laws of his own nature, everyone necessarily wants...what he judges to be good" (E4p19). Self-realising beings embody value just as they embody telos. The very existence of such beings is testimony to the value they possess for themselves. Now the fact that something has a potential does not in itself provide any reason for this being a value. Neither does the fact that a potentiality has been actualised provide any reason why this occurrence is good. Teleology is crucial. This is what grounds good. Further if someone values ends he must value life. It makes no sense to value *x* without valuing what makes the valuing of *x* possible.

Another argument consistent with Spinoza's thought is that if we ask why one ought to live in accord with the requirements of one's nature we are presupposing the value of knowledge; and knowledge could only be a value if it makes a difference to us. This assumes we value what affects us.

We can also derive the following argument from Spinoza's system. If man's essence changed man would not exist. Since man's continued existence is a value so is the continued existence of its essence. The ends conducive to one's life are set by nature of the entity. It is impossible for a living being to be and not be a living being of some kind as there is no such thing as life existing in some abstract way. A being can't remain in existence and be the sort of thing it is if it does not actualise its potentialities. The life of a being can't be sustained by acts that don't conform to a living thing's nature.

I agree with S. Hampshire (1979b, p. 317) that if human beings are trying to actualise their nature then there is a natural basis for this being a value one must not frustrate. It gives some support against those who think that education should minister to pupils' existing desires or should transmit the values of their culture. I will look first at the egoistic strand of this and then say a few words about the realisation of potential.

## **2. EGOISM**

### **DEFINITION**

A Spinozan education must ensure that pupils develop the substantive aim that their own lives go as well as possible. To develop altruistic ends would violate fundamental tendencies. This is the clear implication of the conatus. Yet there is a pull in Spinoza's thought towards considering other beings which creates tensions in his philosophy (Ch4, p. 103). This view of self-interest I shall refer to as S (D. Parfit 1984 pp. 5-10). The implication of the conatus is that everyone should improve his own mind. When S conflicts with morality S tells each of us to give supreme weight to one's own interests. The variations of S that Spinoza would accept are as follows: (S1) What each of us has most reason to do is whatever would be best for himself. (S2) It is irrational to do what he believes will be worse for himself. (S3) It is rational

for anyone to do what will bring him the greatest benefit. (S4) The supremely rational desire is that one's life go as well as possible for oneself. (S5) The supremely rational disposition is that of someone who is never self-denying (Parfit 1984, p. 8).

For Spinoza, reason is impersonal so it is right for everyone to pursue their self-interest. According to J. Kalin (1968, pp. 26-41), it is morally right for a person to act in his own self-interest even when it conflicts with others. So a person ought to do a specific action if and only if that action is in that person's overall enlightened self interest. This is Spinoza's position. Is it internally coherent? The theory implies that some actions are both right and wrong. If B does something then from my point of view it is right if it promotes my interest but from B's point of view it is right if it promotes his interest. So we formulate a third person perspective. If A judges B then A must use this criterion: B ought to do Y if Y is in B's overall interest. The theory tells A and B to pursue an end. That both can't succeed is irrelevant since both can do what they are advised.

According to B. Medlin (1957, pp. 111-118), if I adopt ethical egoism I must approve of B pursuing his interests. So when my interests conflict with another person's, I will approve of inconsistent ends. The correct reply to this is that my believing that A ought to do Y does not commit me to wanting A to do Y. One can think that team X ought to try and win while hoping it fails. Medlin's mistake is the assumption that believing that A ought to do Y commits one to wanting A to do Y and hence encouraging A to do Y. The egoist can assert that it is morally permissible for each person to pursue his self-interest although he does not want others to compete with him for life's goods. I would conclude that the theory is not internally incoherent.

### MORALITY

The free man could ignore others in his pursuit of knowledge. He could be a supporter of slavery as this will enable his temporal needs to be provided while he concentrates on improving his intellect. He will presumably wish to get married in order to continue his line, but could neglect family matters if this interfered with his ultimate aim. The free man is potentially the perfect exemplar of selfishness, since his first response to everything may be 'what is in it for me?'. If this is the implication of a Spinozan education then some people would reject it. The charge is that in so far as Spinoza struggles to prove that the free man will be moral he reveals a fundamental inconsistency in his system; so that to save the coherence of his philosophy it would have been better for him to accept the egoistic nature of the free man. The starting point for examining Spinoza's account must be the *conatus*: "No one, therefore, unless he is defeated by causes, external and contrary, to his nature, neglects to seek his own advantage, or to preserve his being" (E4p20s). The free man must promote his own being: "The striving to preserve oneself is the first and only foundation of virtue. . . . no virtue can be conceived without it" (E4p22c).

The difficulty about Spinoza's account of morality may be illustrated by the question of deception. There are cases where one can only preserve one's life through deception. Successful competition for limited resources demands this. Also fraud

may be necessary to ward off threats to one's life. Yet Spinoza does claim a role for morality. Deceptive behaviour is contrary to reason since it produces social conflict and this is contrary to one's interest. In E4p72 he says that a free man never acts with bad faith. It is clear that Spinoza thinks that it is part of one's nature to behave in a moral way: "A free man always acts honestly, not deceptively" (E4p72). Spinoza is saying that free men are such that their word can be relied on: "Suppose someone now asks: what if a man could save himself from the present danger of death by treachery? would not the principle of preserving his own being recommend, without qualification, that he be treacherous? The reply to this is the same. If reason should recommend that, it would recommend it to all men...This is absurd" (E4p72s). Spinoza seems to be saying that it is better to die than be treacherous. Yet the *conatus* forbids self-destruction. Perhaps dying does not mean one is not preserving one's being: "The more the Mind understands things...the less it fears death(E5p38)". But what Spinoza is saying is that death is still a harm. It is the end of any prospect of increasing one's understanding. The free man pursues the good of life rather than being consumed with thoughts of death: "No one can desire to be blessed, to act well and to live well, unless...he desires...to actually exist" (E4p21).

D. Garrett's (1990, pp. 221-237) solution, which I accept, is that the free man is an ideal limit. Any actual human being would always preserve his being by choosing an act of deception over death. No human being is the ideal free man. As a person becomes more free he becomes more honest. He will lose the motives for dishonesty as he forgoes the pursuit of temporary competitive goods such as wealth. He will be able to achieve his ends by co-operation rather than deception. Garrett says that when deception is required it is explained by lack of freedom, including dependence on external goods; so as finite beings we may have to deceive. If all were perfectly guided by reason our good and the good of others would perfectly coincide. But we can find ourselves in circumstances where we would be motivated to deceive for our own advantage. So deception is a virtue in some circumstances. I would add to Garrett's account that it must be consistent with being free to deceive if one is living with unfree people. Deception would not be needed in a society where all were free. In other words it is a property of the free man that he does not deceive but placed in the real world he may have to. We must encourage pupils not to be deceptive but it would be unrealistic to preach this as an absolute virtue.

There will be occasions where one can only be moral by sacrificing one's advantage. Parfit (1984, pp. 17-19) suggests some arguments which will be helpful in this context. It can be the case that if I try to do whatever is best for me this will be worse for me. The bad effects come not from what I do but from my disposition. If I look out for myself then I may not get help if I need it because people may not trust me to keep my promises which I made to elicit help. If I am never self-denying then, if my car breaks down and I promise to pay you to help me, I will not do so; and you know this so you will not help me. It would be rational for each to make himself trustworthy as we will then be able to enter mutually beneficial agreements. This may be one line of reasoning behind Spinoza's statement: "And so reason would recommend...men make agreements only by deception... This is absurd" (E4p72s). If I try to do what is best for me I may often fail. Suppose I steal whenever I believe that I will not be caught: I may be often caught so even in self-interested terms honesty may be the best policy. This is not a valid objection to S since S is only self-

defeating because of my incompetence in following S. It may be worse for me to have a self-interested disposition. S is indirectly self-defeating because it would be worse for these people if they were never self-denying. But S does not tell these people never to be self-denying. If these people are never self-denying this is worse for them. S claims that it is irrational for these people to allow themselves to remain never self-denying.

It may be said that Spinoza attempts to show that the free man will be altruistic as this is consistent with his nature (Appendix, p. 145). Also the development of knowledge is not a solitary affair and men will profit from the ideas they can obtain from others, hence the value of educating for freedom. Yet despite some good arguments to show that the free man will be moral there is still a pull towards self-interest via the conatus. I would judge that this is not a bad thing. It is by no means certain that one should be concerned with others first and oneself last. If their interests have a claim on one then surely one's own interests have a claim on oneself. Enabling pupils to develop a drive to maximise their own interests while not damaging others is a worthwhile aim of education. A strong element of egoism in our motivation is not some contingent fact. According to T. L. S. Sprigge, the idea of a person whose motivations were universalistic is unintelligible (1988a, p. 185). The basic *nisus* to expel bad and sustain the good is at the core of what it is to be a particular individual. The fact that man is a social animal and needs others to attain greater knowledge and material well-being does not make the attainment of well-being anything less than the individual must do for himself. It is the greater possibility for growth that social life affords that constitutes its extreme importance for man.

### THE REALISATION OF POTENTIAL

The second element in Spinoza's claim is that a thing is perfect when its potentialities are realised. This means that man's good is not just to enhance his interests but to do this in a special way, where he actualises his being. This is achieved in becoming as free as one is capable of. One general objection to Spinoza's position is that many things that are, are not good. But it is only as actualising potential that an existing thing is good so it does not follow that Hitler is good since his traits don't actualise his potential. Spinoza thinks he can show that vicious acts don't actualise man's nature.

Another problem is that goodness admits of degrees but being is all or nothing. But there is more to being than existence. The actualisation of potentialities is gradual so the being of a thing whose specifying potentiality is being actualised admits of degrees.

There are problems about ascribing natural abilities to people. Does a person get born with the standards and values associated with being a musician? Even if individuals do have natural gifts we must question whether they should be cultivated. If a child with an aptitude for music or maths has it nurtured then questions arise about the educator's right to shape the child's development in that way. He is being steered in a certain direction. It is said that pupils should develop their potentialities

to the fullest extent. But why should we want a person to be enormously good at maths rather than just competent? J. White (1982, p. 35) disputes the claim that pupils should develop their potentialities to their fullest extent. He points out that there is no reason to work with nature rather than against it. If it were true that whatever attributes one were born with ought to be fostered then it would follow that if we were born with innate aggressiveness we ought to be encouraged to be more aggressive. White's general position is that one cannot argue from an empirical fact to a conclusion about what we ought to do. He questions that we should we push things so far rather than just aiming for competence. Encouraging pupils to do their best is not the same as pushing them to the limit of their capacities. (White's views are discussed further in Ch5). Spinoza's view, which I support, is that the drive for self-realisation is the essence of one's nature and it is from this that its value can be derived (Appendix, p.144).

### THE GOOD FOR MAN

We have shown that the fundamental formal aim of education is to enable people to realise their own nature. Education is needed because people mistake what is in their interests. They pursue what they think is in their interests, although as I have shown not always very actively. Spinoza states that each person from the laws of his nature seeks what he judges to be good (E4p19). He also states that: "All are not naturally conditioned so as to act according to the laws and rules of reason...they are in the meanwhile bound to live and preserve themselves as far as they can by the unaided impulses of desire. Nature has given them no other guide, and has denied them the present power of living according to sound reason; so that they are no more bound to live by the dictates of an enlightened mind, than a cat is bound to live by the laws of the nature of a lion "(TPT XVI, 201). In E4p65 Spinoza states that this preference is guided by reason. Bennett (1984, pp. 290-294) says that E4p8, E4p14-17 shows that Spinoza says that ordinary untutored value judgements are erratic and guided by how the speaker feels and what he wants at the moment of speaking. But E4D1,2 suggests improved value judgements. The Spinozan man is prudent and has informed opinions about what will serve his interests (E4p18s).

We need to give some content to the notion of the self to be realised, as this broad aim could be consistent with many contents which Spinoza would reject, e.g. in terms of pleasures. Some would see education's function as securing work, which in turn leads to the acquisition of consumer goods. For Spinoza people attain their well-being when they become independent in their thought and behaviour. The goal of self-preservation is only achieved in a pattern of thinking and living which embodies freedom.

## 3. FREEDOM

### DEFINITION

According to Spinoza, man "...follows and obeys the common order of Nature, and accommodates himself to it as much as the nature of things requires"(E4p4c). By this he means that the content of our beliefs and affects is shaped by our standpoint in

the spatio-temporal order. What a person is or does depends on who he chances to meet and what associations happen to have formed in his mind between one object and another. If X resembles Y, whom he disliked, he will dislike X. We may value things because we have been brought up in a particular culture; our belief that objects have certain properties may be determined by the nature of our sense organs and the location of those objects within a certain context. We attain self-realisation not by being immersed in our culture but through independence of spatio-temporal circumstances, what Spinoza calls the common order. We view the world from the here and now. What is to be developed is something more general and less bound up with personal circumstance. In positive terms it means transcending the limits of one's particular existence, where one's thoughts and behaviour are shaped by one's culture and sense organs. It is a striving to go beyond one's boundaries and become more. We are part of Nature determined in our thought and behaviour by external circumstances. But we are able to stand out against this. The issue is not whether there is a common human nature, for there is a structure of capacities, tendencies and sensibilities that humans bring to their life world, but what kinds of things we can say about it. It involves a capacity to engage in a transcendent normative structure. We have abstract meta-properties to transform the presented materials out of which we make our lives. I think Spinoza would have agreed with the following statement from I. Berlin: "The essence of the notion of liberty, both in the positive and negative senses, is the holding off of something or someone- who trespass on my field or assert their authority over me or of obsessions, fears, neuroses, irrational forces- intruders and despots of one kind or another" (1969, p. 158). But Spinoza takes freedom to its limit of complete independence of spatio-temporal circumstances (Appendix, p. 148).

This freedom is an exercise concept, as the more one's beliefs and affects become independent the more free one becomes. I agree with Hampshire that Spinoza identifies the essential nature of any individual with what makes it a distinct individual which Hampshire identifies with being independent in one's activity: "The more active and self-determining he is, to that degree also he can be more properly regarded as a distinct thing, having an individuality that sets him apart from his particular environment"; "They are to be judged as more or less complete individuals...distinguishable from the temporary influences of their environment in the common order of nature" (1979b, p. 304). A reading of Spinoza would suggest that knowledge forms this end of self-realisation. There is in fact no inconsistency here as this end of freedom is necessarily realised through the development of reason and knowledge (Ch1, p. 23).

To attain freedom is to change one's being in the direction of transcendence. We can't become free and remain the same as with some legalistic concepts, e. g. an increase in freedom to park one's car would not entail a change in one's being. It is not to adopt a set of standards external to oneself but to enjoy authentic existence by transcending one's conditioned existence through moving to a higher level of existing: "...man conceives a human nature much stronger and more enduring than his own, and at the same time sees that nothing prevents his acquiring such nature, he is spurred to seek means that will lead him to such a perfection" (TdIEs13). I have said that one only realises one's nature if one attains a state which expresses it and which one accepts as a fulfilment of one. Spinoza says that freedom is this state:

"That thing is called free which exists from the necessity of its nature alone, and is determined to act by itself alone. But a thing is called necessary, or rather compelled, which is determined by another to exist and to produce an effect in a certain and determined manner " (E1D7); "...we are driven about in many ways by external causes, and that, like waves on the sea driven by contrary winds, we toss about, not knowing our outcome and fate"(E3p59s). The lower or finite aspect of human nature is an imperfect stage of man's being. The higher or infinite aspect is the goal of perfection. We are capable of emancipating ourselves from the particular and attaining a view of things from a universal point of view.

### DEGREES OF FREEDOM

Spinoza accepted that there are degrees of freedom: "A man who is guided by reason is more free in a state...than in solitude..."(E4p73); "...the less indifferently we affirm or deny something the more free we are"(Ep. XXI); "The more, therefore, we consider man to be free the less we can say, that he can neglect to use reason..."(PT 11, 294); "But human power is very limited and infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes. So we do not have an absolute power to adapt things outside us to our use "(E4AppXXXII); "So we conclude, that it is not in the power of any man always to use his reason, and be at the highest pitch of human liberty"(PT 11, 294). I agree with Bennett (1984, p. 317) who says of the Ethics that: "Part 4 tells us how to move towards greater freedom, whereas Part 1 reminds us that we cannot go the whole way. We might see the concept of the free man as a theoretically convenient limiting case like the concept of an ideal gas". As finite beings we are agents of the broader social structure. There can be no end of history and we can't become immortal. Finitude is never abolished.

Following J. Wetlesen (1979, pp. 3-4), I will distinguish between absolute and relative freedom. The former involves a realm of thought and behaviour where we are totally untouched by, divorced from spatio-temporal circumstances. In the midst of the common order we participate in an eternal realm. This is not sufficient for complete freedom as we still live within a spatio-temporal order. Even if one grasps the eternal realm interaction with the environment continues as before: "Man would perish of thirst and hunger if he would not eat or drink until he had obtained a perfect proof that food and drink would do him good"(Ep. LVI). Wetlesen (1979, p. 24) defines relative freedom as the degree of autonomy one may have in relation to the external environment. This involves two features, originating one's states and integrating beliefs into eternal principles. I agree with A. Naess (1977, p. 140) who says that Spinoza would not accept any model of a free human being consistent with a low degree of relative freedom. But if we are concerned with eternal ideas then we may not be concerned with solving issues in the temporal domain. A. Donagan (1988, pp. 200-206) thinks that metaphysics can lay claim to essentially timeless truths. But it could be said that Spinoza's metaphysical doctrines have little relevance to matters of real life. He says that the judgement we make about the order of things is imaginary (E4p62s). So what we grasp of the order of things is the product of a partial view. E4p62s could be taken to mean that Spinoza's view is that true cognition can't have any relevance to the common order. But (Donagan 1988, p. 167) Spinoza's theory of knowledge can be generalised to the realm of practical choices. This



reveals a tension between the demands of absolute freedom which requires the development of a self totally free of culture and relative freedom where we can attain more or less control in relation to one's environment (Ch1, p. 21). As freedom is an exercise concept the less time one spends controlling the environment the less free one is but the more time one spends controlling one's situation the less free one is in absolute terms. We are part of the common order and a theory of freedom must enable us to gain freedom while not rejecting our status as finite beings. Nevertheless this still does not resolve the tension between the two. How much time should one spend exercising control over the common order compared to contemplating eternal truths? There is a sense in which the study of empirical science makes one no more free than following tradition. To rely on the senses is as much a renunciation of my freedom as acting on authority. In these ways attempting to control one's empirically based states leaves one unfree. The more we control nature the more free we become qua freedom of control but the farther we are away from freedom qua complete transcendence (Ch5, p. 132).

We can become freer in relation to the common order. A person gains in freedom when he or she behaves rationally in more kinds of life situations. Man can always be judged in terms of whether he shapes his concrete existence in terms of his essence. One element of this control involves governing our life by beliefs and values which rely less on our specific position. The more this goes beyond one's situation the more free one is. One must organise one's life into a rational life. Another element is that we originate our states whether they exhibit absolute or relative freedom. We form ideas, whatever their content. A person is free to the extent that his conatus is a source of such temporal changes. According to L. Rice (1977, p 183) the basic argument of Part 5 is that intrinsic to freedom is the process of arriving at it. We rise above our circumstances in terms of the way we hold our beliefs. Do they form in us by circumstances or are they based on reason? This applies to eternal and empirical ideas. The essential nature of man is a force which makes for self-assertion (H. H. Joachim 1901, pp. 256).

Using this framework we can deepen our understanding of Spinoza's ideas in this way. The implication of the conatus is that a necessary condition for being free at all is that one originates one's states. I think that if it were possible to instil eternal ideas into a person's mind then that person would not be free at all. There are of course degrees to which a person may be free in respect of origination and the chapters that follow will detail this (Ch2, p. 42, 54, Ch3, p.74, Ch4, p.109). Originating one's states is not sufficient for full freedom. Our cognitive and affective states must be independent of the common order in their content and there are degrees of this transcendence.

#### FREEDOM AS CONTROL

Spinoza regarded control as an aspect of freedom: "For the man who is subject to affects is under the control, not of himself, but of fortune, in whose power he so greatly is that often, though he sees the better for himself, he is still forced to follow the worse"(E4pref); "...every change proceeds either from external causes...or from an internal cause and the choice of the subject himself, e.g., that a man becomes

darker, becomes ill, grows, and the like all proceed from external causes, the two former against the subject's will, the last in accordance with it: but that he wills to walk, to display anger etc., these result from internal causes" (CM 1/256/10). Spinoza says the free man "...complies with no one's wishes but his own" (E4p66s). He says that "...if by a man who is compelled he means one who acts against his will, I admit that in certain matters we are in no way compelled and that in this respect we have a free will"(Ep. LV111). Referring to the passions he says "...each of us has...the power to bring it about that he is less acted on by them"(E5p4s). He states: "...we understand by those which are in our power those which we bring about through the order of, or together with Nature, of which we are a part. By those which are not in our power we understand those which, being outside us, do not undergo any changes through us, since they are far removed from our actual essence... "(ST 2, V). The following statements by T. Reid express this conception of freedom well: "Everything which undergoes any change must either be the efficient cause of that change in itself, or it must be changed by some other being. In the first case it is said to have active power and to act in producing that change. In the second it is merely passive"(1969. Essay iv. ch2).

Human actions can be raised to a less mechanical level and be less externally determined. I will develop this account in ways consistent with Spinoza's thought. The power of a thing is its ability to make a difference in the situation in which it is. We can be taken out of the life of mere successive impulses which move one and can determine for oneself what we shall do. According to T. Honderich (1988, pp. 382-384) our hopes are that we will make something happen, bring something into existence. We aspire to changing or maintaining our lives through our endeavours. We believe we stand to our actions in such an initiating way that we have at least some chance of fulfilling our hopes. The outcome should come about because we believed certain things and because we acted as we did on the basis of those wants and beliefs. The fundamental imperative in an education for freedom is to encourage people to become self-dependent.

One can approach a definition of freedom as control through an example. If Mr X knocks Mr Y to the ground then Mr Y would not be in control of his behaviour but Mr X may be in control. If Mr X hits Mr Y in a rage then one would say that he was not in control (E4p59s). According to D. C. Dennett (1984, p. 52), A controls B if the relation between A and B is such that A can drive B into whichever of B's states A wants B to be in. 1. If I have control over X then X depends on what I do. I am an important part of the causal process producing X, such that if I did something different X would be different. 2. I must be conscious of X's dependence on me in order for X to be under my control. If I am not aware that I am stepping on an insect then its life is not under my control. Spinoza makes a distinction between activity which is self-conscious and that which is not. He says that he has not explained desire by appetite (E3 Def Aff). If an action is regarded as voluntary it must be based on reasons (Ch4, p. 95). We must make a distinction between reacting to an external situation in a stimulus-response way and responding in a resourceful reasoned way. We impose order on our states, responding to situations in the light of our principles. To flourish is not just to possess what is good for one's nature qua free being but to secure it. Whether I am free now is not just a question of what I am like but also of the part I have played in getting to be what I am like.

H. F. Hallett (1962 p. 126) says that real self-control requires the power to determine in some degree the nature of the self. It is said this is not possible as all things are determined. But Spinoza never contemplated the suggestion that the human mind qua mind could be the mere resultant of the forces involved. On the contrary in true cognition the mind is free of extrinsic compulsion from transient causes and operates from its intrinsic power. True science proceeds from cause to effect (Ch3, p. 77), which actualises the potency of the cause. In duration we can become more or less free by the exercise of effort in the field of otherness (Hallett 1962, p. 134). But because in any 'now' its potency is limited so also is its power of self-improvement at that stage.

The other aspect of self-control involves not being deflected by circumstances from doing what is in accord with one's nature (Ch4, p. 100).

#### **4. FREEDOM AND REASON**

According to Spinoza, one attains well-being in governing one's states by reason. This is not an alternative to freedom as in developing reason you **are** developing freedom. Of course, as Sprigge shows (1984, p. 163), we could realise this freedom in ways other than in what Sprigge calls Spinoza's narrow sense of reason. We could see freedom developed in artistic endeavour. We could follow M. Warnock (Ch5, p. 123) and see it in the development of the imagination. That a Spinozan education would not develop these expressions of freedom follows from Spinoza's conception of freedom and may be taken as a limitation of this kind of education. We could also adopt an existentialist position where freedom is realised in not adopting any fixed standards, where we make criterionless choices. According to a view associated with Sartre, one can only be free if one creates these principles by choosing them. But Spinoza's view would be that these choices must be situated in a context. Man's well-being rests in freedom; understood as the ability to act in accordance with reason, rather than to act on no basis at all. Spinoza correctly sees that it is the nature of the determining cause that affects one's freedom. If it lies in particular spatio-temporal stimuli then one is not free. If one is determined by considerations that transcend these local circumstances then one is free. Spinoza's view is that freedom restricts the kind of knowledge that will be promoted. Any belief will not do as it must be rooted in reality for this transcendence to be genuine (Ch5, p. 121). It is because knowledge is independent that it displays the autonomy of the possessor. Some thought is not to be explained within the framework of events in the common order of nature. It is explained by reference to a rational order which is not an order of temporal succession (Hampshire 1975, p. 46). It is because of this that we can attain freedom. I will show that we achieve transcendence by understanding and caring for the permanent order of nature. This is the development of a higher self; structured through being embraced within the intelligible structure of Nature. To live in accordance with such standards is to become less a function of the present and particular; as we transcend the common order into a world of eternal principles.

That Spinoza saw a connection between freedom and reason can be seen from the following: "The judgement can be dependent on another, only as far as that other

can deceive the mind; whence it follows that the mind is so far independent, as it uses reason aright. Nay, in as much as human power is to be reckoned less by physical vigour than by mental strength, it follows that those men are most independent whose reason is strongest, and who are most guided thereby. And so I am altogether for calling a man so far free, as he is led by reason"(PT II, 295); "A free man...lives according to the dictate of reason alone..."(E4p67Dem); "...we shall easily see what the difference is between a man who is led only by an affect, or by opinion, and one who is led by reason...I call the former a slave, but the latter, a free man "(E4p66s). I will say a few words at this point on how reason liberates us. The remaining chapters of this thesis will detail this liberating force. I will start with an outline of absolute and relative freedom.

Absolute freedom involves regulation of thought by eternal principles. These are ideas that are true in all possible worlds (Ch2-3). We achieve freedom by understanding the union existing between the mind and the whole of Nature. This involves perceiving the entire order of causal relations *sub specie aeternitatis* or as they might appear to a pure god-like rational intelligence that has transcended all merely contingent limitations of time and place (Ch2, p. 39). Another connection is that in so far as one's mind is constituted by eternal ideas they are not dependent for their truth on anything else and one's state can be understood through itself alone without reference to other conditions. By contrast ideas whose truth is a function of particular spatio-temporal circumstances make one's mind dependent on factors external to one (Sprigge 1984, pp. 160-164).

Absolute freedom in relation to behaviour involves standards that are constitutive of one's essence as a rational being. Such principles and values are not a function of one's particular culture or of one's particular human constitution. Spinoza considers that reason is one example of the kind of unconditioned value which exemplifies freedom: "The true intellect can never come to perish, for in itself it can have no cause to make it perish"(ST 2, XXVI); "...it is also clear which things are in our power and are subjected to no external causes; similarly we have also proven...the eternal and constant duration of the intellect"(Ibid). I will show that the love of Nature also realises freedom (Ch4, p. 89).

Absolute freedom can also be illustrated with principles of rational choice. Given a choice between x and y in a situation where x is more efficient in attaining one's ends it is rational for one to choose x. These principles would apply whatever the nature of one's ends (Ch4 p. 99).

One achieves relative freedom in cognition by understanding principles that transcend narrow perspectives, such as general principles of science. One can become more free in relation to these if they are integrated into eternal principles. The more these beliefs are grounded in other beliefs the more free one is. A person who can provide a wide ranging explanation of inflation has beliefs that are more independent of local stimuli than a person whose beliefs are based on hearsay: "As we ascend from the common-sense level to the scientific level. . our ideas progressively reveal more of the causes of the modifications of our body, in the sense that the ideas of these modifications are parts of the whole system of logically related ideas"(Hampshire 1987, p. 76). We can turn our limited judgements into a

conception that goes beyond our standpoint by explaining things by wide ranging laws. We can explain why we see the sun as near to us in terms of universal laws. In so doing we transcend our local position by linking it to this wider framework (Ch3 p. 73).

Relative freedom in relation to behaviour involves values and principles that are independent in the sense that they are not just of value in a particular society but of value to one qua human being. If human nature has no innate needs then the way we are formed in one society may be no more inappropriate than the way we are formed in another. We can grant that any species has its own distinctive species life. One can set out accidental features of people as opposed to essential, temporary as opposed to long standing. We distinguish desires in terms of whether they define what we are. One desire is more integral to our identity than another. So we do recognise that some states may not represent what we are and others do. To be free is to engage in activities that are intrinsic to one as a human being: "The Desires which follow from our nature in such a way that they can be understood through it alone are those related to the Mind insofar as it is conceived to consist of adequate ideas. The remaining Desires...must be defined not by human power, but by the power of things that are outside us. The former, therefore, are rightly called actions while the latter are rightly called passions" (E4AppII); "We say that we are acted on when something arises in us of which we are only the partial cause, i. e., something that cannot be deduced from the laws of our nature alone"(E4p2Dem). L. E. Goodman (1987, p. 125) says we are free to the extent that our own character and identity are determinants of our actions, rather than the mere effects of the actions of others upon us. Spinoza would say that a person who devoted his life to gambling was unfree as he was pursuing ends not in accord with his nature qua human being. The unfree man "...allows himself to be guided by things outside him, and to be determined by them to do what the common constitution of external things demands, not what his own nature, considered in itself, demands"(E4p37s1). Those desires which do not follow from our nature are those whose "...force and growth must be defined not by human power, but by the power of things that are outside us"(E4AppII). The more one's thought and behaviour is integrated into these principles the more free one becomes. At one extreme is the person who has no principles and is completely at the mercy of stimuli. This would correspond to H. Frankfurt's (1982) wanton. A person may have principles but these are so inflexible that he can't deal with the common order. This is why in dealing with others the free man may occasionally have to be fraudulent (Ch1, p. 16).

I have just shown that Spinoza's view is that to be free is, in part, to govern one's behaviour by values that are important to one qua human being and qua rational being. A person would consider himself to be unfree if he is prevented from pursuing what he considers important to him. A person who placed more value on reading political literature than car parking would consider that his freedom was more seriously curtailed by restrictions on reading. If the norms that govern us matter to us then so will the ability to make our evaluative judgements effective in our actions. If we care deeply about the value of our acts we want more than the power to translate our own value judgements into effectual willing. We want to be able to appreciate the relevant values and arrive at competent appraisals of the actions we face. But Spinoza is correct in his view that being able to guide one's acts

by means of values one accepts is not strong enough for freedom. Freedom demands one holds the values one ought to hold (S. Wolf 1990 p. 117). They must conform to rational standards. Now Berlin (1969, p. 133) has argued that such a conception of freedom could imply that one could be forced to be free by being forced to undertake certain activities. Spinoza would reply that it is a necessary condition of freedom that one should originate these activities oneself. It could also be said that Spinoza's conception leads to a division within the self with one's empirical nature being brought to heel. This is not correct as Spinoza recognises the importance of the desires for food, drink and pleasure to human beings.

Having made these points, which will be pursued further in the thesis, I will now say a little more on the connection between freedom and reason.

Spinoza saw the mind and body as expressions of the same thing. There is an identity of being in that the same modification is produced in the mind and body. All that is action in the mind is action in the body (E3p2s). In a sense which may be difficult to grasp, the development of the mind towards greater self-completeness is also the development of the body: "...he who, like an infant or child, has a Body capable of very few things, and very heavily dependent on external causes, has a Mind which...is conscious of almost nothing...On the other hand, he who has a Body capable of a great many things, has a Mind...very conscious of itself, and God, and of things. In this life, then, we strive especially that the infant's Body may change(as much as its nature allows and assists) into another...conscious of itself, of God, and of things. We strive, that is, that whatever is related to its memory or imagination is hardly any moment in relation to the intellect"(E5p39s). The boundaries of the body may be drawn where it is convenient (Hallett 1930 p. 129) and this is around the contours of the visible organism. But really a person's body is his responsive perspective of Extension. Freedom depends on the power of the person's mind to follow a truly consecutive order of thought and not be diverted by every transient stimulus from outside; and there is the corresponding power of the body to maintain itself in a normal state in spite of external disturbances. Spinoza states that "Whatever so disposes the human Body that it can be affected in a great many ways, or renders it capable of affecting external Bodies in a great many ways, is useful to man" (E4p38). He says that "The more the Body is rendered capable of these things, the more the mind is rendered capable of perceiving"(E4p38d). This also has implications for the relief of physical pain (Ch4, p. 94). This growth of the self is what Goethe meant when he wrote: "Every object well contemplated, awakens a new organ within us" (Amrine 1987, p. 318).

All acquisition of knowledge is an enlargement of the self. Contemplation enlarges the objects of our actions and affections making us citizens of the universe. The man whose mind mirrors Nature becomes in a sense as eternal as Nature as a whole. The impartial contemplation of the universe raises us for the moment above our purely personal destiny. In proportion as the infinite grows in us we live more completely the life of that universal Nature which embraces what is infinite in each of us.

The development of reason achieves freedom not just because we are governed by universal standards. The attainment of knowledge is the development of the self as the mind is nothing more than its ideas. Insofar as our ideas are self-complete our

self is self-complete and hence self-sufficient. "...if we come to know God in this way, then we must necessarily unite with him"(ST 2, XXII). Pure activity belongs to Nature as a whole. Men can approach this state by increasing their power and this can only be done by knowing more (R. Saw 1972, p. 115).

As will be shown we only attain complete freedom through self-knowledge (Ch4, p. 83). We understand ourselves as expressions of the universal Nature and through this understanding we attain these universal states. To know one's essence is to know oneself to be a finite participant in the infinite and eternal activity of nature.

By understanding Nature including oneself one comes to recognise that all things are necessitated to be as they are. This will make us freer, as our well-being will no longer be influenced by events that befall us (Ch4, p. 93).

An essential element of freedom is that we originate our states (Ch1, p. 21), and it is through reason that this is achieved. The power of reflexive thinking gives us our sense of freedom (Hampshire 1979a, p. 74). It is expressed through and assisted by the methods expounded by Spinoza to improve the intellect and remove the passive affects (Ch3, p. 74, Ch4, p. 109). It sets a limit to the possibilities of manipulating desires. Our sense of freedom is an awareness that we have this power to discount and that we are not helpless in the face of external causes. We have the ability to reflect on our states of mind and modify them. The power of reflection includes the power not to yield to the inclination to think there are two candles when the eyeball is pressed, and the power to move intentionally. If the thought of the causes of my desire is changed the affect is changed; so we have the power to alter our states by reflecting on them. We are partly dependent on the action of external causes and partly thinking beings who by surveying their states may rearrange them in independence from the common order (Hampshire 1977, p. 74). It is a characteristic of men's thought that it is reflexive and the activity of thinking entails a process of stepping back, making corrections for points of view. This is the respect in which we are autonomous (Hampshire 1977, p. 66). Most of our beliefs and affects are formed without reflection through the laws of association. They are not the outcome of controlled inference. When a person recalls what made him have the desires he has he can separate the normative question of whether they were good reasons from the question as to whether he has specified the considerations at work. We are liable to be ignorant of the causes external to our thought which are determining our desires and beliefs. As long as mental forces that affect human decisions are unconscious, they act as determinants that the person making the decision cannot take into account. The compulsive washer is not at liberty to act on the information that his hands are clean, as evidence can't determine his decisions. If I understand why I hate x then I can remove this affect. Coming to understand why I pursue ends against my better judgement may help me overcome this and enable me to become free. I will be better able to attain my ends if I know the causes of my states. Where I am able to reflect on my obsession I establish a space between it and myself and diminish its hold. By understanding the reasons for one's desires, some of which may be preventing one from doing what is important, one can undermine their influence and become more successful in pursuing those things that are in accord with one's nature. If we come to see that doing x will not gain us respect then we may not need to do x.

Also self-deception may result in one hiding a desire for power over others, so one does not realise that one is acting for this end.

Within the empirical world a distinction can be made between two modes of human conduct of which one is subject to determination by circumstances and the other not. The latter is represented by man's relatedness to circumstances. We can adopt a regulative standpoint in relation to circumstances. Man's reflective relatedness to circumstances is not a continuation of them but an independent attribute of man as a creature with the power of reflecting upon and adopting a standpoint in relation to the world in which he lives. In theoretical activity the individual relates himself reflexively to the universe at large in an attempt to decipher meaning.

There are other reasons why knowledge of Nature liberates us from our circumstances. The activity can continue without abatement. It is different from the ebb and flow of replenishment activities which exhibit an internal sequence of changes and minister to need. The objects of the intellect are maximally stable. They never vary or come to be but are always there and in the same condition.

So people are aiming to realise themselves. They are only successful if free and only free when governed by reason. The strength of Spinoza's account is that one is only fully free if one has generated one's states and if they are in accord with one's nature and transcend spatio-temporal contexts in their content.

## **5. DETERMINISM**

According to Spinoza, when we have acted in some way, we could not have done otherwise under exactly the same conditions. On the conception of free will supported by C. A. Campbell (1962) the will is only free if we could have acted differently under the given conditions. Spinoza himself deduces that there is no freewill by appealing to the mind's status as a mode of the attribute of thought and the general proposition that all modes of any attribute must be determined by prior determinate modes of that attribute in a causal sequence (Appendix, p. 150). This is achieved as follows:

- (1) Determinism reigns in the physical world.
- (2) Mind and body are reflections of the same thing.
- (3) So determinism reigns amongst mental phenomena.

There are several possible objections to this position, some of which Spinoza himself deals with satisfactorily. First, it may be said that the will extends more widely than the intellect, so what applies to the latter does not apply to the former. Spinoza's reply is that the will does not in fact extend more widely than intellect, as it is identical to ideas; in the mind there is no volition excepting that which an idea involves. Secondly, it may be said that we have the power to "...suspend our judgement so as not to assent to things we perceive" (E2p49s111A.ii). Spinoza replies by denying this (E2p49s111B.ii). Additional objections are in letter LVIII and the Short Treatise Pt2 Chapter XVI. I support Spinoza's view that there is an explanation of everything and that unless one shows that given the explanans the



consequent must follow one has not provided an explanation as the factors cited are compatible with the event not taking place. This rules out free will in the sense understood by writers like Campbell (1962).

It may be said that given Spinoza's determinism he cannot defend freedom as an aim for human beings. But it is in the absence of dependence upon an external agency rather than the absence of necessity that freedom consists: "Thus you seem to me to make no distinction between coercion or force, and Necessity. That man desires to live, to love, etc., is not a compulsory activity, but it is none the less necessary..." (Ep. LV1); "For instance, a stone receives from an external cause, which impels it, a certain quantity of motion, with which it will afterwards necessarily continue to move when the impact of the external cause has ceased. This continuance of the stone in its motion is compelled, not because it is necessary, but because it must be defined by the impact of an external cause" (Ep. LV111).

Although Spinoza can give a sense to the idea of freedom, we must still consider whether, consistently with his determinism, he can recommend that we should realise our nature through freedom. For it is true both of those who are striving to actualise their being and those who are not, that they cannot do other than what they do. And if we can't do other than what we do, how can we say we ought to have done something else?

First we should see in more detail why Spinoza takes the position that we cannot do other than we do. Given his determinism we might say that we can't recommend that people follow a different path as they can't change course. We can see why Spinoza takes this position. An action a person performs is related to his desires in that to desire is to act (E3DefAff1). One cannot act independently of the desire. Desires are necessarily related to ideas. To judge anything to be good and to desire it means the same thing (E4p19). Given our idea that X's death benefits us then one can't desire anything else, although there may a desire which overrides this so that we don't act against X. Given the ideas one has one cannot desire anything else and hence cannot do anything else. To maintain that a person could act differently, given his desires which constitute his acts and which are a necessary consequent of his ideas, is to misconstrue the situation. The desires cannot be different given the ideas. The person could not have acted differently as the act expresses the desire and the desire being what it is the act can't be different. To say he could desire differently is mistaken as, given the ideas, one cannot have different desires.

Yet Spinoza is recommending that we strive to actualise our being through freedom and knowledge: "...I came to the conclusion that, if only I could resolve, wholeheartedly, to change my plan of life, I would be giving up certain evils for a certain good" (TdIEs7); "...man conceives a human nature much stronger and more enduring than his own, and at the same time sees that nothing prevents his acquiring such a nature, he is spurred to seek means that will lead him to such perfection" (Ibid s13). He refers to a model of human nature which we may look to and this will guide us on good and evil: "By evil, what we certainly know prevents us from becoming like that model" (E4 Pref). This model is that of the free person.

There is, then, an apparent paradox in Spinoza's thought: he holds that we cannot do other than we do, yet recommends that we aim at freedom. I believe that the paradox can be resolved if we recognise that although Spinoza says that things could have been produced by Nature in no other manner, this does not mean that we have no power to do anything else; for we can be determined by adequate ideas. People's intrinsic drive to promote their own being means that they will be amenable to what will do this; hence the possibility of modifying their behaviour comes about (Saw 1972, p. 125). Spinoza maintains that existing causes determine whether certain efforts will be made at certain times while allowing that future outcomes are dependent on our efforts in particular contexts, which include acting on reasons. Unless an emendation of ideas is brought about, the possibility of the desires and acts being other is ruled out. But we are capable of acting on adequate ideas. So a man could have had a better understanding of the situation. The desires correlated with this improved understanding would then be different. Desires can't be altered without altering the system of ideas in the mind. So given that someone thinks money is good he can't but pursue money. But he could have had different ideas to the ones he had, although at the time he acted his ideas could not be other, given the other ideas he has. But by learning adequate ideas one will want even more to govern one's states by these ideas (Ch4, p. 89) and this opens up the possibility of change. We can change others by giving them ideas and a methodology which they will adopt to form more adequate ideas (Ch3, p. 74, Ch4, p. 109). I would also say that we must devise techniques to stimulate the drive itself since people may be overcome by apathy. But there are inconsistencies in Spinoza's thought as he could be taken to be saying that no other state is possible (See Appendix, p. 150 for further discussion of whether there are inconsistencies in Spinoza's determinism, and whether it is to be equated with necessitarianism).

I am in agreement, then, with Curley (1979b, p. 373), who says that Spinoza's philosophy can accommodate a prescriptive ethics. Good counsel is no less good because it will either be necessarily acted on or necessarily not acted on. It makes sense to issue a general prescription to people to do things even if you know some will be unable to comply. Where the offering of such counsel can contribute to providing circumstances sufficient for right action we would be foolish not to offer it. But where a person is subject to strong emotions there is not much use in our addressing moral imperatives to him. What is needed is a reorientation of one's life. Moral philosophy should focus on enduring states of mind. Curley is thinking here of enabling people to pursue better means to their fulfilment but it will also mean encouraging this expansionary drive itself.

I will now consider if Spinoza's account of freedom of control is consistent with his determinism. For Spinoza, being governed by reason is necessary for this control. Spinoza's point can be supported, as we do distinguish between people whose behaviour can be altered by persuasion and those who cannot. Many can be persuaded from altering their intentions, but an alcoholic cannot. This is not because the alcoholic's behaviour can be explained but theirs can't: both have causal explanations. The test for self-control is that one's intention can be altered by providing reasons; this is consistent with determinism. Intentions are unalterable where one is not open to being persuaded by reasons to alter them. But if the beliefs and desires which cause actions are themselves caused by things over which people

have no control then the acts are less free. It follows that it is a condition of freedom that the agent has an effective and intelligent will; but not a sufficient condition. One could be threatened and thus carry out orders but not be free. The problem lies with the source of the will: the agent is not in control of its content.

Cases of coercion can be contrasted with cases such as the following. Suppose a person goes to a hypnotist to stop smoking; then the desire not to smoke is due to conditioning. But the self does enter into the casual process as he has voluntarily had himself conditioned, and therefore has some control over his actions. Also the acquisition of a desire through exposure differs from coercion as in the former people have the possibility of coming to have or not have the desire.

Often the explanation of an agent's action will be by reference to his values. But it does not immediately follow that the agent is in control of his action, since we can still ask why the agent has those values, and the answer may always be that the agent's values have been shaped in him by socialisation. This would be a pertinent objection to Spinoza since he accepts that all behaviour is determined by causes and that all humans are part of the common order. It is important to see whether this objection can be answered. A first suggestion might be that there is a self from early on to contribute to the making of the developed self. But the problem is that the self that contributes to the making of the new self is itself the product of outside influences. One can shape responses in accordance with existing loyalties that have been formed in one. Spinoza's reply is that we can shape our states in accordance with principles that stand outside the common order (Ch4, p. 97). Hard determinists would still not be satisfied with this, since they would hold that my current capacity to make decisions and control myself is not something I can take credit for. How can any deterministic process of character transformation beginning with a being that was not responsible for its decisions yield a being who is responsible for character? No matter how many steps of character formation one is engaged in there has to be a first step and if it was something over which the agent had no control then its product can't be something the agent is responsible for. But Spinoza's doctrine of the *conatus* locates within the nature of individuals a source of change.

We have shown that we can change our states and be in control if we govern ourselves by reasons. But, according to Spinoza, we can't acquire beliefs at will, as the will and intellect are one and the same. He is saying that in the case of judging or acquiring beliefs there is not an intellectual process in which material comes before the mind and then a voluntary action of making a judgement about it. Spinoza says that "...it can be objected to us that experience seems to teach nothing more clearly than that we can suspend our judgement so as not to assent to things we perceive" (E2p49s111Aii). Spinoza denies "...that we have a free power of suspending judgement. For when we say that someone suspends judgement, we are saying nothing but that he sees that he does not perceive the thing adequately. Suspension of judgement, therefore, is really a perception, not free will" (E2p49s111Bii). A person can't take up a position at will. If the evidence for *p* is sufficiently strong we come to believe it without choosing to do so. We do speak of accepting a belief but this does not imply real choice. It makes no sense to say I decided to think such and such is the case. But I can cast around for other factors. I can go over the ground

again. We can practise the reflection and use the methodology which enables us to acquire ideas and this is what makes them under our control.

While this shows that we have some control over our thinking, the objection may still be pressed that determinism undermines knowledge. Mental acts are purposive. We also speak of being active: attending, questioning, inquiring, trying to prove conclusions. Some mental acts are preceded by active intentions, e. g. considering a proof (Honderich 1990, pp. 47-50). Suppose I get the final piece of evidence for my conclusion; then if determinism is true a whole series of previous acts necessitated my getting the final piece of evidence. But I can suppose there may exist facts such that different acts would have led to their discovery; if my acts are subject to determinism I can't be confident that I shall investigate all sectors. On the other hand, my view is that the pursuit of an adequate method for discovering knowledge is one of the causal antecedents in the acquisition of ideas. I will show, in the next two chapters, how knowledge can be acquired, and this will help overcome the objection raised in this paragraph.

I have said that Spinoza claims that the free man will be moral (Ch1, p. 16). But he rejects the view of moral terms accepted by most people and in a Spinozan education people would be disabused of using moral language in the way commonly understood. I will briefly outline this sense in the following paragraph:

The judgement about the moral rightness or wrongness of an act involves more than judging that it conforms to moral principles. It also involves assigning responsibility to the agent. An action for which the agent cannot be assigned responsibility is one which falls outside morality's province (Honderich 1990, p. 59). If there were no responsible actions there would be no judgements as to the morality of actions. The subject-matter of morality as we know it would not exist (Honderich 1990, p. 60). Morality is at bottom the question of how the world ought to be. When we say that a particular action was morally wrong we imply that the agent was the source of the act and could have done otherwise had he chosen to do. We disapprove of it because we think it was morally wrong. Moral disapproval is not just a matter of taking an action to be wrong and just wanting to affect the future, i. e. wanting to prevent more such acts (Honderich 1990, p. 64). There is a tendency to act against the perpetrator which we think is justified. We have retributive feelings; we think that the person should suffer distress for what he has done, even if the distress is of knowing that he has the disapproval of others. Also we think that the agent should get what he deserves. We can summarise this by a graphic example. Most people would assume that an education system should support the kind of moral language where we come to judge that a person who has tortured to death young children in front of their parents is morally wrong and wicked. This judgement at least involves thinking that he could have done other than he did if he chose, that what he did ought not to have happened, that some form of punishment is deserved, that we should feel a moral outrage that is qualitatively different to any horror we may feel over some natural disaster like an earthquake. It is this language which would be deemed false in a Spinozan education and students would be encouraged not to make such judgements (Ch4, p. 137). To take a person to be morally responsible is to say that an essential part of what we take to be true is that the action was his doing.

Our moral language presupposes a belief in free will which is undercut by the determinism Spinoza advocates. Given that all things are determined (Ch2, p. 51) (Appendix, p. 150), moral good and evil are abolished. Every act is what it is and it makes no sense to say it is morally bad which implies that it could be other. The acts of Hitler and Mother Theresa are both determined. To say Mother Theresa is a morally superior being makes no sense, where this carries with it the idea of her freely choosing to do good works. Spinoza can allow no sense in which the terms good and bad can be applied to persons which is not a sense in which the words are applicable to any other natural object (Hampshire 1987, p. 115), although the criterion for application in the case of human beings is different, in that for Spinoza we judge that someone's act is good if it promotes freedom.

In addition the world is an expression of Nature, so we can't say anything is evil. All things express the conatus (Duff 1903, p. 211). As much as we may recoil from this, the Yorkshire Ripper, in the pursuit of his ends, exhibits energy and skill. In so far as he believed that killing served his interests, as he defined them, he is expressing the conatus. From the point of view of Nature as a whole we just have systems enhancing their being. That a tiger kills a gazelle is no more morally good or bad than a man killing chickens for food, or a man torturing another. All are expressions of the will to exist.

What sense of moral disapproval then will be developed in a Spinozan education? We can turn to Honderich for help here. Our moral judgements are not just reactive but purposive. Moral disapproval involves wanting to affect the future. That the man acted in accord with the desire he desired to have is enough for moral judgement (Honderich, 1990 p. 78). This is consistent with determinism. We may disapprove of those whose actions flow from unacceptable desires. We are not prohibited by determinism from approving and disapproving of others where what is in question is acts flowing from embraced desires. We may approve of acts which are fair. Determinism forces us to give up something in connection with moral responsibility but leaves us with reactions to the desires of others where these flow from a person's nature. We can say that it was a bad thing that it happened just as it is a bad thing that the hurricane destroyed all the crops.

According to Hampshire (1987, p. 113), moral terms have the same use as 'pleasant' and 'admirable'. We can, in a Spinozan education, express approval and disapproval. But what is this approval about? In letter XIX Spinoza says that the more perfection a thing has the more does it participate in God. So we can say that one person has more depth of reality than another. Within the whole there are grades of perfection as the essence of things is nearer or further from the wholeness of substance. We can compare people with the exemplar of the free man. This is a teleological ethics like Utilitarianism except that for Spinoza we assess actions in terms of their impact on freedom. So if one considers that morality is defined in terms of its consequences on others, and acts can be graded in terms of greater and less harm in this regard, then this is a morality. After the performance of an act we could express pleasure or displeasure just as we do about the bad weather.

It may still be objected that this is an inadequate morality, since to blame someone is to say more than that something took place which we object to. We disapprove not

merely of the action and consequences but of him. We distinguish praising something beyond a person's control, as when we praise someone's beauty, from praise that is relevant to moral worth. We may criticise someone's stupidity but think it largely out of his control so we will not regard it as relevant to his moral worth. Many would argue, against Spinoza, that when we say a person's actions are morally repugnant we are not saying he exhibits less freedom than someone else and hence we express displeasure. We are at least attributing free will to that person in relation to his acts. This point can be developed further. If an avalanche kills many people we don't express moral condemnation of it in the way we do of acts of genocide. Spinoza would say that this is because we can't influence the mountain whilst we can change people's behaviour. But, in reply, we do not hold an animal morally responsible yet its future behaviour can be influenced by reward and punishment. I would suggest that it is because the genocide was deliberately brought about that we apply the special language of morality to people and not to animals and objects. We might say that an education that renders illegitimate, in the accepted sense of these terms, statements such as that the events in the former Yugoslavia are morally reprehensible, that terrorists are evil, would not be an education worth having.

This does not mean that for Spinoza there is no gradation of wrongness and corresponding expression of displeasure as some acts are more destructive of freedom than others. To kill another person is clearly a greater deprivation than to steal from him. So we may express greater displeasure at the former act. Mother Theresa's actions in saving lives are good and Hitler's were bad. But the sense we have of morality that comes from the recognition of free will is absent.

Spinoza's account of morality can be developed further. For Spinoza, people are not evil in choosing the bad. People do not desire anything other than their good. The moral problem is not that men know their good but won't do it but that they don't know their good. We can compare people in terms of the adequacy of their understanding. We can say this is a bad act in that it involves inadequate ideas of our welfare. Evil is want of knowledge. People do not act guided by what they know to be bad. A bad action is a wrong judgement of our welfare, e.g. the fraudulent person is not governing himself by universal ideas. Spinoza's view is that the person who defrauds people of their life savings has misunderstood that fraud is contrary to welfare. But we would want to condemn him because he had deliberately cheated others, not because he is ignorant. A morally bad action is not just a mistaken judgement of our own welfare. We believe that some deliberately choose bad acts. This is the basis for our ascription of evil and moral repugnance to people.

A further objection to Spinoza is that people may want to do wicked things on the basis of understanding themselves and their situation (Taylor 1972, p. 294). In reply Spinoza would say that it is built into the human situation that the kind of action he commends is what someone with a proper understanding of things will commit himself to (E4p36s). His demonstration of the virtues is predicated upon showing that they follow from the nature of the free man. According to Hallett (1957, p. 102), Spinoza deduces the desire for friendship from the desire to increase one's power of acting and this power is increased by association with other beings (E4AppVII). (Hallett says this will not be selfishness as, when we are free, we will see ourselves as part of the community of other beings). From what the free man needs and what

social arrangements are conducive to this we will cultivate "...the virtues which are ordinarily accounted virtues by just, peaceful, and tolerant men" (Hampshire 1977, p. 69). The basic claim is that if men really understood what fulfils them they would be in harmony with each other. But, by way of objection, the urges which lead to conflict may not be overcome by the rational side of our nature (Sprigge, 1984, p. 169).

My conclusion is that, given the rejection of free will, Spinoza is correct in his view that much of our moral language is inappropriate. I agree that as we come to have more knowledge of the causes of people's behaviour "...we cease to apply purely moral epithets to them as responsible agents...expressions of moral disapproval come to seem useless and irrelevant" (Hampshire, 1987, p. 121). On the other hand, as human beings, we cannot dispense with these concepts altogether. Even if we could completely give up making these moral judgements, then to do so, in my view, would be less than we expect from human beings. Although we may be nearer to being rational beings in dispensing with those moral judgements that depend on the existence of free will, the losses to human life in not being able to form such judgements at all are too great.

## **6. FREEDOM AS THE HIGHEST GOOD**

I shall consider now how Spinoza justifies the claim that freedom is the highest good. It is Spinoza's view that the ways a thing can be benefited are determined by the kind of thing it is and what its essential properties are. So given the nature of a plant some things are good for it. Likewise the essence of man determines what is good for man and this is constituted by freedom. It could not turn out that the best life for a human being was the life characteristic of ants. We have shown that we can only attain this freedom through reason; arguments to show that reason is man's essence will demonstrate that freedom is, as reason is freedom's constitutive expression. Man's essence can't be defined in terms of knowing God as we can form a conception of man that does not have this knowledge. I suggest that when Spinoza states "By idea I understand a concept of the Mind that the Mind forms because it is a thinking thing" (E2D3), "Man thinks" (E2A2) gives the essence of man. It does not give a complete account as man consists of mind and body. But what is given by the former is paralleled by the latter (E2p13c). Also: "...although the soul is determined by external things to affirming or denying something, it is not so determined as if it were compelled by external things, but it always remains free. For no thing has the power of destroying its essence. So what the soul affirms and denies, it always affirms and denies freely..." (CM1/278/5). Man is an animal who needs to bring his intelligence and understanding to bear on issues his life presents. This is a distinguishing feature of a human being. Though there are other distinguishing features such as the ability to laugh this does not explain the greatest number of other features of a human being. Man's ability to engage the world in conceptual terms does make possible and explain the greatest number of other features. One only has affects and ideas in so far as one conforms to rational norms. One cannot be feeling any emotion unless one has certain beliefs. Without reason one could not have those experiences integral to being a person. In addition some of the objects of reason are categorical concepts such as causality and extendedness. The writings of

Piaget have demonstrated that without such concepts one cannot have a mind at all. Living rationally is not a specific end which competes with other ends. It is achieved through the attainment of specific ends which exemplify freedom. In this way I would suggest one is already expressing a rudimentary independence which reaches its highest pitch at the level of intuition (Ch2, p.57).

Preserving oneself is maintaining oneself as a distinct thing against the forces that impinge on one. So given the value in maintaining one's being, the value of freedom follows. We exist as a will to power, as the built in thrust to enhance oneself. The drive for self-preservation is a drive to extend one's liberty in relation to external things. Thus if it is valuable to be, it must be valuable to be free. It has been argued (L. Haworth 1986, pp. 55-57) that there is a basic competence motive. This involves getting control over one's environment and expanding one's control by developing a specific repertoire of skills and generalised coping ability. The disposition for control is part of the equipment the person brings with him on entering the world. The fact that children are active does not need to be accounted for in terms of environmental influences. The role of this motive can be compared to the law of inertia: a body in motion will remain in motion unless acted on by a force. We don't need to explain why the body is in motion but only changes in motion. An active child striving to become autonomous is doing what humans qua humans do. The persistence with which people pursue a project suggests that the disposition to do so is part of the equipment the individual brings with him in to the world. Spinoza's defence of the value of freedom must rest on showing that in themselves people are striving to expand their being (Appendix, p. 144) and this being is constituted by freedom. The fact of existence testifies to the drive to stand out and assert being against un-being. This freedom reaches its highest form in man, and as other beings exhibit this ability to stand out in such an embryonic form the term 'free' will not apply to them.

It is important to us that we don't lead our lives on the basis of false beliefs about the value of our activities. We value our production of activities over and above the satisfactions gained from the mere experience of engaging in them. My life only goes better if I am leading it from the inside according to my beliefs about value. Human flourishing does not just require that a human being possess health, pleasure and friendship, he must attain these through the exercise of his own efforts. If a human being were attached to a machine which satisfied every need this would not constitute a worthwhile life. We believe that human life is worth living only if the good life can be secured by effort. This is certainly Spinoza's view. We are not willing to praise the life of an inactive adult; our ethical assessments are based on activity.

Spinoza shows that because it is impossible to fulfil an autonomy abdicating agreement it is morally impermissible to make it. "...for no one can willingly transfer his natural right of free reason and judgement" (TPT XX, 257). One has no right to incur an obligation one cannot discharge. This is a valid argument, as from the fact that one knows one will not be able to fulfil a commitment it does seem to follow we ought not to make it in the first place, but we can agree to be brainwashed and thus put ourselves in a position where we can fulfil the agreement to give up freedom. But Spinoza's point is that just as in oneself one cannot commit suicide (Appendix p. 144) since the conatus is one's essence, so qua free person one cannot give up freedom and the free man would be wrong to give freedom up.



But even if we could give freedom up we would still say it was unjustified to do so. Suppose one is told to do an evil deed. The person to whom one subordinates oneself may become corrupt. To say that the person can disobey, implies he has the right to function as a critically rational agent, but this is to deny that the original subordination was autonomy-abdicating. One can't have a good reason never to act on reasons by making oneself a ward of others. In addition moral rules are applicable to all and everyone can't be a ward. So if following rules can only work if others follow different ones then the rules can't be correct. But this is not a conclusive argument as it is difficult to find the appropriate level. My being a teacher succeeds only because others do other things. It could also be said that even if one is not entitled to give up freedom, it does not show one should develop it. But my view is that not to have developed it is to have given it up.

Also a rational agent, whatever his desires, has reason to preserve his capacity for rational agency. Someone who destroys this destroys himself. This will not convince those who live for the moment nor those whose goal is to be irrational. It is true that any rational agent has a reason to preserve rational agency as a necessary condition of attaining goals which he happens to have; but this only shows that practical reason is instrumentally valuable to any rational agent. An instrumental connection between a heart's strength and its capacity to pump blood does not show why a heart is better off beating on its own if a pacemaker could do the work instead.

The free person will not be agitated or frustrated and this also underpins the value of freedom. One attains freedom through knowing Nature and this is an object that can never be corrupted or taken away. One's state corresponds to the objects one pursues. The joy (Ch4, p. 89) that flows from an adequate knowledge of oneself, through which one's freedom is expressed, is the inevitable consequence of that knowledge and so one will value freedom. In addition there will inevitably flow a desire to know more things in this way and thus become even more free. There is also an intrinsic link between freedom and eternity (Ch2, p. 60). Spinoza thinks he has shown that good is what enhances one's being and thus gives one pleasure (Ch4, p. 96). So what gives unending pleasure must be the highest good. Spinoza's view is that sufficient motivation for the ascent to the eternal is present to us in the disorder of our lives. One central task of the educator will be to display the intolerable aspects of our lives to us in a clear way. The problem is that this recognition will depend on accepting that freedom is the highest value, which is what we need to prove. Spinoza thinks that humans are by nature beings that seek to transcend, through reason, human limitations.

Spinoza would have thought it inconceivable that people will prefer the ephemeral; and if they do, I suggest that this is because they have been conditioned by their culture. To wish for a reward for good living other than the good life is as absurd as to wish for something other than health as a reward for becoming healthy (Saw 1972, p. 146). We can always ask if freedom, like health, is good; but to value having Parkinson's disease rather than being healthy would be as absurd as valuing unfreedom as against freedom. Spinoza is showing a better life than the one people live and cannot conceive that it will not be accorded the highest value. In the end I think this is all one can do.

## **CHAPTER 2- KNOWLEDGE AND FREEDOM**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Educationalists must help pupils acquire, for themselves as far as possible, that kind of understanding that makes them free and avoid those cognitive states which enslave them. The different kinds of knowledge are also different modes of existing. We see the perfection of one who takes his stand upon truth as contrasted with one who does not: "Because the one easily changes, and the other does not, it follows one has more constancy and essence than the other"(ST II, XV). These next two chapters show what kind of knowledge of ourselves and Nature is needed for this transcendence. We are giving content to the end state of freedom. We understand principles without which nature can't be or be conceived. The beliefs we form must have a complete justification, by being deduced from other ideas. At the level of Intuition we see features at a glance and experience the workings of Nature and feel a joy at our transcendence of the common order. In the next chapter I specify the content of these beliefs. Educators could be teaching 'truths' which they think conform to the criteria but do not.

There will be those who cannot understand and apply these principles. This does not mean that a Spinozan education is of no benefit to them. This education aims to enable people to realise themselves by becoming as free as they can given their limitations of intelligence. Even to have a few grounds for one's beliefs will give one more freedom of control, albeit at a very low level. Some people will leave the education system much less free than others just as some now leave knowing less about, say, economics than others.

In Section 1 I show that the state of mind characterised by freedom is one where we grasp the truth of Nature. This in general terms involves grasping the being of things; and this in turn involves grasping the complete causes of things. I show that freedom involves an active acquisition of ideas (Section 2). In Chapter 1 I showed that part of being free is to be the source of changes, and I show here what one must attain in cognition to be active. The stage of the imagination (S3) shows how one falls short of freedom of mind. Reason (S4 and S5) sets out what must be done to achieve a grasp of the truth. In S6 I show what is involved in integrating reason and imagination. At the level of intuition (S7) we understand Nature in such a way as to move to the highest plane of freedom. I will then show (S8) that Spinoza's account of eternity can in part be understood as specifying further what it is to have freedom of mind. Throughout this chapter the central theme of freedom is pursued around the ideas of absolute and relative freedom (Ch1, p. 20). One attains freedom in so far as the content of one's states is independent of the common order, and I show what absolute freedom will involve (S1,4,7,8). I also show what it is to achieve relative freedom with respect to the content of one's thoughts (S6). The other aspect of relative freedom is that one must originate one's thoughts. I show what is involved in this (S2, S5). I also show what it is not to have freedom of mind (Parts of S1 and all of S3).

## 1. TRUTH

It is by forming ideas which represent Nature as it is in itself that we are liberated from the common order: "So an idea is called true when it shows us the thing as it is in itself, and false when it shows us the thing otherwise than it really is"(CM 1/246/30). In the section on Fluidity Spinoza says that "...notions which are derived from popular usage, or which explain Nature not as it is in itself, but as it appears to human sense, should by no means be numbered among the highest generic terms, nor should they be mixed up... with notions...which explain Nature as it is in itself. Of this kind are motion, rest, and their laws; of the former kind are the terms visible and invisible, hot...fluid and firm, etc. "(EP. V1). I agree with T. Mark (1972, p. 85) that for Spinoza ideas are true when they are apprehensions of being. What counts as truth is whether the object is completely revealed. M. Heidegger (1949, p. 319) says that truth uncovers the entity in itself. But this connection between truth and reality is not universally accepted (M. Devitt 1984, p. 35).

According to Spinoza: "a true idea must agree with its object"(E1A6). A true idea is a particular expression of reality. It is reality thought about. It is the agreement of idea and ideatum that defines truth. According to Mark (1978, pp. 23-25), the terms 'true' and 'false' are used to refer to the relation of an idea entertained by an individual and the object. My idea is true if it agrees with that of which it is an idea. For an idea to be true in us, its idea must be present to us in the same way it is present to Nature. It is the ideas which achieve this that must form the content of education. We deploy a distinction between how things appear and how they really are, and Spinoza pushes this to the limit. The attempt to say what things are like in themselves is an attempt to find a means for characterising them that is independent, not only of the particular circumstances of an individual observer, but of the situation of human beings located on the planet at a particular stage with a particular range of sensory faculties. When we urge people to be objective, we are recommending that they try not to be influenced in their judgements by accidents of their situation (B. Williams 1978, p. 211). This leads to the idea that an aspect of the world is genuine only if it would be recognised as real by observers with different natures from our own. If a quality is to be real, it must not depend for its existence on contingent features of those who are observing it or the circumstances under which the observation is taking place. In seeking to be objective we arrive at the concept of a perspective purified of all contingent influences.

The problem is that there have been major shifts in the way the world is viewed. Much of what was accepted as obvious a hundred years ago in science would now be denied. It is said that human thinking is always restricted to a grasp of things mediated through our time. H-G. Gadamer (1975) reminds us of the shifting historical perspectives in which thought develops where the rules are never a-historical. According to R. Rorty (1980, pp. 373-375), there is no alternative standpoint from which to criticise practices according to some standard of truth that would not need to make good its claims within a given community of interests. The view is that reality is structured by concepts that vary from language to language. Rorty says it is impossible to provide any stronger theory of truth that could adjudicate the issue from a standpoint outside the context of consensus values; he rejects ideas of truth as a matter of foundations and a priori concepts. Discourse

rests on nothing more than language games and cultural forms. But Spinoza believes that thinking is its own sign and must be regulated according to standards of clear and distinct ideas. Spinoza argues that language is a deceptive medium but it is the only means for tracking confusion to its source and arriving at better more adequate knowledge. Theorising has the power to undermine existing habits of thought and produce radical change in the currency of ideas. I agree with E. Gellner (1992) that minds are endowed with the potential of attaining objective truth if they employ the correct method. If all standards are an expression of culture then no sense can be made of criticising culture.

Spinoza's assertion that Substance exists can be in part seen as establishing that there is a world that is independent of one and thus by rejecting Idealism he opens up the possibility of attaining true ideas (Appendix, p. 152).

It is Spinoza's view that there are causes for everything being as it is, so in principle there is no reason why Nature can't be comprehended (Appendix, p. 149).

That the world is in principle conceivable does not entail that humans can form a true account of it. If they cannot attain truth then the whole enterprise will fail. Spinoza, however, assumes a direct correspondence between the order of ideas and the order of causal relations. There could be no question of our having an adequate idea that would not correspond to some real-world state of affairs. We can pass from the adequacy of an idea to the conclusion that things in the world are as ideas represent them (Appendix p. 149).

But Spinoza's view of truth may be said to conflict with his view on the relation between ideas and object (Appendix, p. 148).

### CRITERION OF TRUTH

To say that an education for freedom must be concerned with true ideas does not tell us how we can recognise them. We must turn to adequacy. I agree with Mark that the adequate idea of some object is an idea which presents that object as it stands in the self-sustaining context of Nature. It exhibits the logical feature of self-completeness. Self-completeness defines the necessary and sufficient condition for existence and being: "...Thought is also called true which involves objectively the essence of some principle that does not have a cause, and is known through itself and in itself" (TdIEs70). Self-completeness (Mark 1972, p. 74) is the essence of substance and thus one's ideas uncover its being. In forming adequate ideas we are developing a self that rises above the common order, as adequate ideas manifest the self-causation of Nature. One might object that it would be possible for an idea to express reality without sharing its defining features. But Spinoza's doctrine that the idea is its ideatum rules out that possibility. Sprigge (1984, p. 161) says that "The ideally free being would be one such that the changes it passes through follow on each other in a manner such that one would need appeal to nothing not included in the thing itself in order to explain them". The conditions that explain the essence and existence of things will have to be incorporated in our thoughts for them to be true. The essential conditions that define a circle are those that need to be comprehended

for it to be a true conception. According to Parkinson (1978, pp. 49-50), to say that X has a true idea of S means that X has a complete knowledge of S. A true idea of Peter is a judgement that Peter is P made in the complete knowledge that Peter is P. This shows that Spinoza's account is not a coherence theory of truth in the understood sense. It is because and only if coherent beliefs reflect the order of things in Nature that the beliefs are true.

I will discuss Spinoza's account of falsity (Parkinson 1978, p. 45). A false idea fails to be the idea of the thing as it is in Nature. To judge that S is P when S is not P is to have a false idea of S as we do not grasp how S stands in Nature. In so far as we have false ideas we do not attain a state of being characterised by freedom. "...falsity consists only in this: that something is affirmed of a thing that is not contained in the concept we have formed of the thing..." (TdIEs72). This account is in accord with our notion of falsity. There follows another which may not be. Spinoza states that one may have a false idea of S if one judges S is P without a complete knowledge that S is P. Suppose I apprehend a finite thing which is part of a comprehensive system, but I do not grasp that context; then my idea of that thing is partial. I have a limited view of it. Falsity is defined as inadequate knowledge (E2p35). To judge that S is P when S is P is a false idea if one does not have complete knowledge of P. Mark (1978, p. 25) says that if my idea is not an adequate expression of an ideatum then it is false; e.g. my idea that grass is green does not adequately express its nature, as grass is not solely responsible for its greenness. To have an adequate idea of its greenness we would need to grasp the whole of Nature. Ideas of physical objects are revealed by images which describe only the physical effect of some body on our body. To have an adequate idea we would need a complete grasp of causal relations. To show that an idea is inadequate it is sufficient to show that it does not include ideas of all the things to which its object is causally related (E2p24,p25). One would need at least to understand the nature of one's sense organs and the spatio-temporal context of the grass. C. D. Broad (1930, p. 19) cites the example of a person who has a stomach ache but does not know its causes: "Now contrast this with the idea which a physiologist might have of the process in my stomach. He would know a great deal about its causes and his idea of it would be fairly clear and adequate". A finite mode is something which is dependent on other finite things. Its dependence is part of its nature and in apprehending falsely I apprehend something that does not possess the internal features which would establish it as a real thing. R. J. Delahunty (1985, p. 49) says that any state of mind which falls short of knowledge including true belief is an error. The lowest stage of knowledge is the formal cause of error as this is what error consists in: "Knowledge of the first kind is the only cause of falsity..." (E2p41). Falsity consists in the privation of knowledge (E2p35). Bennett (1984, p. 169) criticises Spinoza for saying in E2p35s that error consists in lack of knowledge rather than arising from it. But Bennett has overlooked the sense of falsity that I have considered.

Spinoza would claim some limits on our capacity for objectivity in particular when explaining the existence of finite things, as this would involve an infinite chain of causes. We could not attain an adequate understanding of events. We would need the idea not just of a single body, but also of that body together with all the other bodies that affect it. As Hampshire says there is no limit to the number that would have to be included (1979b, p. 301). Although we can't have complete knowledge of

finite things we can have ideas that are more or less true. The wider the context the closer one is to knowledge. On the other hand, we can form true ideas of eternal features of Nature. T. Nagel (1986, pp. 95-96) points out that I can believe reality extends beyond the reach of possible human thought. There are people who constitutionally lack the capacity to conceive of things that others know about. People blind from birth can't understand colours. People with a permanent mental age of 9 can't understand Maxwell's equations. We can imagine there are higher beings capable of understanding aspects of the world that are beyond our comprehension. Then they would say of us that there are certain things about the world that we can't even conceive. We need only imagine the world is the same except that these higher beings do not exist. So the existence of unreachable aspects of reality is independent of their conceivability by any actual mind.

In this section I have shown that we become free by forming ideas of Nature that are self-complete. Absolute freedom is where we have self-complete ideas, relative freedom where our ideas are more complete, being integrated into a wide ranging explanation. I have shown that for Spinoza truth means agreement with reality, adequacy means self-sufficiency. The free man is one who understands nature rather than recites a string of propositions. In a Spinozan education there will not be an emphasis on isolated facts. Learning that sugar dissolves in water is not the kind of idea that conforms to the criterion of truth Spinoza has established. Unless this is grasped within the context of its causes one's apprehension will be false.

## **2. ACQUISITION OF IDEAS**

Freedom does not just involve having a set of ideas that form a coherent whole, we must have been active in acquiring them for ourselves (Ch1, p. 21). In cognition this means forming ideas. The source of this is the conatus which in relation to the mind is the urge to increase its coherence. It is explanation-hungry for its determinants, to articulate their inter-relations (Rorty 1990, p.203). The common order threatens the mind as it subjects it to impingement from the here and now. Some people have more difficulty than others in moving to adequate ideas and thus exhibit less relative freedom; as they do not generate these ideas. This is an independent element as a person could be active in forming ideas albeit of an empirical nature whilst another person could have some eternal ideas but not be active as he did not form them. To be a source of change is not sufficient for full freedom as we do recognise people who are very active but misdirect their activity in attaining ends that do not liberate. This activity must come up to certain standards if one is to become fully free. We can press this connection further in that the criterion for true activity is whether one has formed adequate ideas. A person who thinks in great detail about the merits of consumer goods before he buys them will not exhibit the control that a person who forms adequate ideas does. Nevertheless, some activity is present here compared to a person who buys on impulse. To be active mentally is to understand one's experience rather than to be overcome by it. To have ideas at all is to exhibit a minimal degree of freedom. Spinoza defines an idea (E2Def3) as a conception of the mind. He says he uses the word 'conceptus' in preference to 'perceptio' because 'conceptus' expresses an action of the mind. An idea involves an affirmation or denial (E2p49). Parkinson (1978, pp. 36-37) suggests that for the phrase 'the idea of S' we may substitute the phrase 'a judgement about S' where we ascribe a predicate P

to a subject. Ideas manifest the conatus as they involve an attempt to control experience by unifying it even at the elementary level of ascribing predicates to subjects. Even in the most untutored, the mind is modifying its perspectives. From the point of view of education one will be concerned to enable pupils to be in a position where they can form beliefs on their own. We must remove hindrances to this inherent drive if we are to achieve freedom (Ch5, p. 109). Educational practices must encourage this endeavour not because it will be useful to have an inquiring mind but as an expression of freedom. Practices which ignore or stifle this cannot be permitted.

Spinoza's conatus applies to minds as well as physical things. Minds can be seen as ever more complex wholes and some will become more complex over time. People have an intrinsic endeavour to construct complex wholes. If this is thwarted there will be a desire to restore this equilibrium: (a) knowledge is a sequence of more coherent systems. One person's knowledge being more coherent than another and thus more independent of local determination; (b) people have an inherent drive to produce more coherent systems of knowledge. My view is that Piaget's (Hamlyn 1978, p. 48) account of assimilation and accommodation is certainly within the thrust of Spinoza's account, although one can't point to any particular passage where these concepts are expounded. It would be quite consistent with his philosophy to see cognition as a constant internal structure maintained in equilibrium by assimilation and accommodation. This is paralleled by his account of the organism (Ch3, p. 67). In assimilation one conserves the existing structure by modifying the element incorporated. The young child who pretends a chip of wood is a boat is assimilating it to his concept of a boat. This involves relating experiences to an existing conceptual scheme. Explaining ideas in terms of a theory would constitute another example. Accommodation involves adapting ideas e. g. modifying theories in light of discrepant facts. There is a natural basis for learning and those who are not active have been overcome by external circumstances. Man has essentially the desire to learn. The educator can assume inherent activity on the part of students.

It is the self-reflective nature of thought that enables people to achieve the aim of the conatus to assert itself against the common order (Ch1, p. 27). It is because we can reflect upon what we think that we can improve our thinking. The idea of idea is the same entity more conscious of itself as a heightened awareness of the original ideatum. We know the original object of knowledge more fully, more self-consciously and with keener critical awareness. Even low levels of consciousness are more than a passive reception by mind. According to E. E. Harris (1973, p. 87), to be fully conscious at least involves some contrast between an object and a background and transcends what is immediately present. Even the distinction of figure from ground is active. The inherent self-reflectiveness of consciousness is what enables us to purify the intellect and progress from confused ideas to clear knowledge. The idea of the idea is the individual's power to distance itself from its immediate experience. In E2p21s Spinoza concludes there is an idea of every idea. Spinoza does say that the idea of the mind and the mind itself are one and the same thing which is conceived under one and the same attribute of thought. Bennett says this collapses 'idea of idea' into 'idea'. As we go up the ideas we tell the same story: it is a useless redescription of physical things. Bennett (1984 pp. 184-191) points to a way out using p21s. The idea of the idea is nothing but the form of the idea in so far as the latter is

considered as a mode of thinking and without relation to the object. Bennett says Spinoza takes 'idea of idea' to pick out intrinsic properties of the idea of x but not its representative ones.

I have shown that we attain freedom when in having adequate ideas our minds mirror the self-causation of Nature, a necessary condition for this being that we have formed these ideas ourselves. Spinoza delineates three levels of comprehending Nature. The Imagination is a level where people do not attain freedom.

### **3. IMAGINATION**

At this stage all our ideas are inadequate. I have shown that this constitutes lack of freedom, as one's being has not attained that state of self-completeness that characterises the free man (Ch2, p 41). Our liability to inadequate ideas arises because we are embodied. It is because we are part of the common order, subject to its laws, that ideas are formed in us which enslave us. In imaginative experience each man lives in his own personal world, constructed for him by chance conjunctions and principles of which he is not the originator (Joachim 1901, p. 167). One's being does not rise above one's context. The more one's ideas are shaped in this way the more one becomes a cipher to one's circumstances: "...in imagination the soul only has the nature of something acted on" (TdIEs86). We need to understand this mode of cognising ourselves and Nature if we are to overcome it. In this common order we are "...determined externally, from fortuitous encounters with things, to regard this or that, and not so long as it is determined internally...For so often as it is disposed internally...then it regards things clearly and distinctly" (E2p29s). I agree with L. Lermond (1988, p. 30) that the first stage of knowledge is the fragmented perception of a self, alienated from the intrinsic order of the intellect. It reflects the immediate determination of a body encoded by a pattern of association. There is no inner coherence to our mind. Unity is maintained because we happen to be considering ideas here and now. Only the external element keeps it from falling apart. One's thoughts are caused by what we encounter. The more coherent ideas we form the more active we are. But at the level of imagination this activity is dulled as the unification is brought about by circumstances, although even here we have *some* activity in forming concepts. The mind synthesises false wholes as we do not grasp the underlying unity, although even to give a misreading of experience expresses a higher activity than that of, say, an amoeba. At times the external force is too strong and the human being's power of understanding is minimised. At other times his activity perseveres to the level of misunderstanding the constituents of his experience. We are prevented from understanding the eternal order of things by our standpoint: a double bind of unfreedom. My claim is that the content of the current education system is concerned with these beliefs, trapping people within a narrow framework. We may expand our understanding of this stage by reference to Gellner's (1992) account of postmodernism. Meanings are culturally constructed. Facts are inseparable from the observer who claims to discern them. On the perceptions of the imagination Spinoza says that they "...are fortuitous, and as it were disconnected: since they do not arise from the very power of the mind, but from external causes, as the body...receives various motions" (TdIEs84).



### OBJECTS

Included in the imagination are beliefs which hold only within a particular spatio-temporal region. This includes the particular place from which things are observed and the other objects amongst which a particular object is placed, e. g. the state of the light. The conditions on which these beliefs depend include the nature of one's sensory apparatus. These beliefs will alter if there is a change in one's sensory apparatus. One's mind is vulnerable to those changes which will alter one's beliefs. There are a number of problems with relying on sense perception as a source of one's beliefs. Spinoza describes the state of our dependence as follows: "...the ideas which we have of external bodies indicate the condition of our own body more than the nature of the external bodies"(E2p16c2); "All modes by which a body is affected by another body follow both from the nature of the body affected and at the same time from the nature of the affecting body, so that one and the same body may be moved differently according to differences in the bodies moving it. And conversely, different bodies may be moved differently by one and the same body"(E2p13L3A1).

When people think, they do so in corporeal terms, e.g. counting in maths. This inhibits thought about abstract matters. A distinct understanding of objects can't be obtained through the senses as one only grasps changing qualities of things. It was Spinoza's view that the essence of material things lies in energy and extendedness and these were properties grasped by reason and not the senses. Furthermore sense qualities are not quantifiable. Sense based judgements can be unreliable, e.g. luke warm water will seem cool to a warm hand.

### FORMATION OF IDEAS

We are unfree not only because of the content of our ideas but because of the way ideas are formed in us. We are not the source of the changes. The subdivisions of the imagination are a classification of the ways we come to have ideas: "1. from singular things which have been represented to us through the senses in a way that is mutilated, confused, and without order for the intellect; for that reason I have been accustomed to call such perceptions knowledge from random experience. 2. from signs, e. g., from the fact that, having heard or read certain words, we recollect things, and form certain ideas of them, which are like them...These two ways of regarding things I shall henceforth call knowledge of the first kind, opinion or imagination"(E2p40s2). I will consider the first sub-division.

### VAGRANT EXPERIENCE - FIRST SUB-DIVISION

Spinoza would agree with Bacon that "...experience, when it wanders in its own track, is, ...mere groping in the dark, and confounds men rather than instructs them" (1960 Bk1. p96). According to Curley (1979, p. 39), our ideas are formed by what one happens to encounter in life. Vagrant experience can cover singular or general propositions, may or may not involve sense perception. Spinoza says (TdIEs19) that vagrant experience is only so called because it happens by chance and we have no other experience which opposes it. Therefore it stays with us unshaken. I agree with Curley that experientia vaga is a casual and haphazard use of experience. The free and unfree man will see the sun as small but the latter will judge it to be small. The

former will know it seems small and will know why. People have no structure to their thinking, no methodology by which to understand Nature. I will now take this further with the help of Parkinson (1983, p. 71).

Experientia Vaga covers two type of cognition: (1) induction (2) cognition through the senses. In the former case one's ideas are based on the particular instances one encounters; in the latter case on one's senses. Had one encountered different instances by being brought up in a different country, or had one's sensory apparatus been different, then we would have had different ideas: "...he is astonished when he sees something that goes against this conclusion of his..they tell of a Peasant who deluded himself into thinking that, outside his fields, there were no others. But one day he missed one of his cows, and had to go far away in search of her. He was astonished that outside his own small farm there were so very many others" (ST 2,III). This is the condition of many people. Their beliefs depend on their context and change when the context changes. A Spinozan education would offer a true liberation from this. Curley's (1979, p. 39) interpretation of sense experience is that it is assimilated to induction. Knowledge of a singular proposition through simple observation is one species of knowledge by vagrant experience. We have a certain experience, seeing the sun as a small disc, and instinctively assume this is how things are. The problem is that people believe that one can know things through the senses. On induction Spinoza (TdIEs20) says that I know from vagrant experience that oil is good for feeding a flame, a dog is an animal that barks, man is a rational animal. Its weakness is that it is based on a finite set of instances which one has chanced to meet. What ideas one forms does not depend on oneself but on the changing situation in which we find ourselves. This is how people come to acquire their beliefs. This is what the education system must change.

### SIGNS - SECOND SUB-DIVISION

In the Short Treatise it is called knowledge from report. In the TdIE – perception from report or conventional sign. In the Ethics – knowledge from signs (E2p40s). I agree with Curley (1979, p. 34) that this describes a situation where the mind is governed by stimulus-response with ideas being formed in a mechanical manner. People move from experiencing something to having an idea. In the first sub division we jump to conclusions from what we experience. The move from one's experience to the ideas we form is beyond our control, as we are "...dreaming with open eyes, or while we are awake"(TdIEs66). Our being is formed for us. We lack freedom of control. The beliefs that are formed in this mechanical manner are formed on the basis of laws which explain how the mind moves from the thought of one thing to another. Ideas are linked without any intrinsic connection. Ideas float before the mind coming and going. The person's states are determined by whatever factors happen to conjoin his ideas. He is a cipher of the environment in which he exists. On the perceptions of the imagination Spinoza says they "...are fortuitous, and (as it were) disconnected: since they do not arise from the very power of the mind, but from external causes, as the body...receives various motions"(TdIEs84). We experience A and we experience B which is similar, and so A and B are connected for us in our minds by the laws of association. We do not believe things because of principles we apply to our experience. Thinking at this stage operates on the basis of

believing that p because q comes to your attention which makes you think of p. Here the person lacks freedom as his states will be determined by whatever stimulus happens to occur. If x occurs he will think of y, if z occurs then y may not come to mind: "...we clearly understand why the Mind, from the thought of one thing, immediately passes to the thought of another, which has no likeness to the first: as, for example, from the thought of the word pomum a Roman will immediately pass to the thought of the fruit..., which has no similarity to that articulate sound and nothing in common with it except that the Body of the same man has often been affected by these two, i. e., that the man often heard the word pomum while he saw the fruit. And in this way each of us will pass from one thought to another, as each one's association has ordered the images of things in the body. For example, a soldier, having seen traces of a horse in the sand, will immediately pass from the thought of a horse to the thought of a horseman, and from that to the thought of war, etc." (E2p18s). Knowledge by report is where a person believes that p because someone else has said that p. Spinoza says that the man who makes his calculations on the authority of someone else has no more knowledge than a blind person. He repeats; as a parrot repeats what has been taught (ST 2, 1). In TdIEs23 the merchants say that they know what must be done because they have not forgotten the procedure heard from their teachers. It would still be by report if one read it in a manual.

Some of the laws in accordance with which the unfree mind operates are as follows: "If the human Body has once been affected by two or more bodies at the same time, then when the Mind subsequently imagines one of them, it will immediately recollect the others also" (E2p18); "The law that a man in remembering one thing, straightaway remembers another either like it, or which he had perceived simultaneously with it, is a law which necessarily follows from the nature of man" (TPT IV 57). A person may come to connect ideas x and y because he has experienced them together. The connection is contingent in that had the person been placed in a different environment other ideas might have been connected: "But it has this name only because it comes to us by chance..." (TdIEs19). Spinoza recognises other factors that can cause ideas to be grouped together: "So also did the revelation vary, as we have stated, according to the individual disposition and temperament...if a prophet was cheerful, victories...were revealed to him...if on the contrary he was melancholy, wars. . were revealed; and so, according as a prophet was merciful, gentle, quick to anger, or severe, he was more fitted for one kind of revelation than another. It varied according to the temper of imagination in this way:...If a prophet was a countryman he saw visions of oxen, cows and the like" (TPT II, 30). Another factor is the people one has come in contact with: "The ideas of goblins and spirits have no more to do with darkness than light: yet let but a foolish mind inculcate these often on the mind of a child and possibly he shall never be able to separate them" (Locke 1959. Bk2 Chxxx11s10).

Custom is another factor: "let custom from the very childhood have joined figure and shape to the idea of God and what absurdities will that mind be liable to?" (Ibid). Also we are only interested in those features of the thing which are important for a practical purpose. People only look at the weather from the point of view of their concerns today, e. g. to watch a cricket match. They don't look at weather patterns as manifesting universal laws.

The disposition on the part of people to be open to whatever stimulus they happen to encounter is a condition of the majority of the population. It is not a condition which the current educational system attempts to overcome. Indeed much of the curriculum is devoted to responding to events as they come and go. The approach of Technology, for instance, is to develop projects which arise from the pupils' current experience. Such an approach traps people in their spatio-temporal condition.

### DEFICIENCY

"From this it follows that so long as the human Mind perceives things from the common order of nature, it does not have an adequate, but only a confused and mutilated knowledge of itself..."(E2p29c). Viewing Nature from a standpoint in it, not only ties us to it, but prevents us forming ideas which reveal Nature as it really is. Confused ideas are explained by Spinoza as follows: "...the human Body...is capable of forming distinctly only a certain number of images at the same time. If that number is exceeded, the images will begin to be confused..." (E2p40s). Spinoza calls these ideas universals. A person will have in mind what is a horse or dog but this will not represent the true nature of that animal but a distortion based on a few features of those animals. Subtle differences will be overlooked. Viewing from this perspective is distorting as one groups similar things together and blurs differences. As Lermond (1988, p. 30) says, this is the unification of imagined similarity as it does not articulate authentic sameness. Another characteristic of these beliefs is that they involve ideas which are mutilated; a person has no justification for these beliefs. Our idea of sun as a small disc may not be false. This is an accurate account of how it appears. It still appears this way to someone with adequate ideas but he has an explanation for this belief. Error results from taking this belief to represent the object.

Another deficiency is supposals. The supposer simulates a judgement. He is said to suppose that Peter is going home, that trees speak. There is nothing to distinguish supposals from day dreams. There is a procession of ideas flowing through the mind. Falsity presupposes our mind's assent whereas fiction does not. So a pupil may write a poem in which he depicts his garden as peopled by goblins. This is supposal if he knows that it is not, but error if he assents to this as certain. In these ways the imagination will not enable people to know what Nature is really like(Ch5, p. 123). Falsehood comes when we confuse this limited, partial, historically situated knowledge with a truth that is conceived to hold good for all time: "...the imaginations of the Mind, considered in themselves contain no error, or that the Mind does not err from the fact that it imagines..."(E2p17s). We are always in ideology but capable of thinking its limits. For Spinoza, there is a knowledge that belongs to our worldly condition which has its own kind of truth; its claims are partial but they can't be dismissed out of hand. We must learn to distinguish these separate orders of knowledge.

There is a problem of the status of the imagination which Spinoza does not solve. A false idea is taken up into a wider more adequate one. But as Joachim says, that error is a defect in us. So it is something positive. Since we are parts of reality our experience is a portion of God's experience (Joachim 1901, p. 254). The falsity can't be grounded in reality as it brings imperfection into the nature of God, yet it can't be

dismissed as illusion since we are part of reality with our imperfections (Joachim 1901, p. 254).

To conclude this section on the imagination, it is my view that the current education system fails to achieve relative freedom let alone absolute freedom. There is no vision on what control amounts to and most people leave the system as they entered it, at the level of the imagination as Spinoza describes it.

#### **4. THE OBJECTS OF REASON**

We have described how man is made unfree by the ideas he has and the education system which transmits them. There is a way forward. We are able to form ideas which are self-complete and thus uncover Nature as it really is. We attain freedom through knowledge of a realm beyond space and time by understanding features which are eternal. It is Spinoza's view that we become independent of the common order by understanding features of Nature which are logically necessary. This means that it is logically impossible that things should be different, e.g. that Nature should not be extended (Appendix p. 150).

In what follows it is shown that Spinoza thought that there are laws of nature that are necessarily true. This may appear out of temper with contemporary science where all such laws are empirical. I support Spinoza's view that nomological laws can be found. There are commentators who also believe in the existence of such necessary laws. One can cite the following: "The timeless, eternal character of the laws is reflected in the mathematical structures employed to model the physical world" (P. Davies p.83).

One characteristic of reason is that it involves a grasp of different objects than the imagination. At the level of reason we have common notions and adequate ideas of the properties of things (E2p40s2). These objects are common to all or to a range of things, they define the nature of things and are the foundation of other properties of Nature. At the stage of reason one comes to understand universal features of Nature. In asserting that all things have causes Spinoza is attributing lawful relations to all phenomena: "...whatever comes to pass, comes to pass according to laws and rules which involve eternal necessity and truth" (TPT VI, 84); "...nature is always the same, and its virtue and power of acting are everywhere one and the same, i. e., the laws and rules of nature, according to which all things happen, and change from one form to another, are always and everywhere the same. So the way of understanding the nature of anything, of whatever kind, must also be the same, viz., through the universal laws and rules of nature" (E3Pref). Spinoza states that "...there are certain ideas, or notions, common to all men. For all bodies agree in certain things..." (E2p38c). Some are universal in the sense of being applicable in every domain. Others are universal with respect to a limited domain. Parkinson (1978, p. 49) says that the adequate ideas of properties refer to concepts that apply to a certain range of things. The sciences, such as physiology, have part of nature as their field. According to Parkinson (1983, p. 62), Spinoza's common notions include the basic concepts of his metaphysics and science. These are embodied in the attributes and infinite modes. A distinction must be made between a nomological and empirical

law. The former relationship holds whatever the spatio-temporal context. Spinoza would consider that his infinite modes denote such laws. In the attribute of thought the immediate infinite mode is the infinite intellect which can be understood as the totality of adequate ideas in the world, including all true theories. It also includes the psychological laws of association and laws of mathematics.

The attributes are self-sufficient, in the sense that the laws inscribed in them could not be the consequence of more general principles. The infinite modes follow from them. There are laws of motion which apply to all bodies which are in motion and rest deducible from the laws of extension. These laws explain laws of lesser generality and particular happenings. One such principle is the law of inertia (E2p13l3c). According to Bennett (1984, p. 107), motion and rest embody the fundamental laws of physics, such as Newton's second law that when a body pushes another it can't give to it any motion without losing as much of its own. This law is a consequence of the general principle of conservation expressed as an aspect of Nature's immutability. Parallel to the laws of motion and rest I think one must also add the laws of association. At the level of reason one will be comprehending general metaphysical principles and laws of thought and physics. These will be those that are true in all possible worlds and through them one's mind rises above the common order. This is what we must teach if we are to educate for freedom. Real culture-transcending knowledge does exist and we must transmit it and in particular enable pupils to discover it for themselves. According to Y. Yovel (1989b, p. 161) the laws of Nature express God's nature. By knowing these laws and by using them to know particular things we extend our knowledge of Nature. What exists in nature is a set of immutable causal and logical patterns according to which all things come to be and endure. The system of laws determines the behaviour of bodies regardless of their qualitative differences. They will not be studied for their practical use but because they are the constitutive means for realising freedom and ourselves. We need to separate these laws out from empirical regularities. At the same time empirical beliefs will not be neglected as these will be explained through their integration into the eternal principles. It is clear that the main purpose of studying these empirical beliefs will be to illustrate the operation of the eternal laws.

Another feature of these laws is that they are the foundations of Nature. One does not neglect experience but examines the presuppositions involved in it, to trace back to their ultimate ground the principles on which thought proceeds and then to reinterpret experience in the light of the results reached. It is through the partial explanations of things which the categories of science furnish that one is led to seek after a deeper satisfaction. This will be an interpretation of the world by higher principles until it attains a principle that rests on no other. So the highest and lowest are transformed in the light of the first principle of knowledge. The unity of Nature is at the heart of the Spinozan world picture: "Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be or be conceived without God" (E1p15). The fundamental laws not only explain whatever happens in Nature but can't be explained by anything else. If the fundamental laws can't be explained by anything else they must be self explanatory, on the assumption that there is a cause for everything (Curley 1988, p. 44). A Spinozan education will have a unified curriculum in that pupils will be shown how all the phenomena studied as part of separate subjects are rooted in an underlying creative first principle. Although this would not be the purpose of studying these

principles we can turn to J. Bruner for some additional reasons for studying them. According to Bruner (1978, pp. 23-32), the more fundamental an idea the greater will be its breadth of applicability to new problems (Ch5, p. 120). Schools should teach the fundamental ideas in whatever subject is being taught. Also unless detail is placed within fundamental laws it is rapidly forgotten. A scientist does not try to remember the distances traversed by falling bodies in different gravitational fields over different periods of time. What he carries in memory is a formula that permits him to regenerate the details on which the formula is based. An understanding of fundamental principles appears to be the main road to transfer of training. To understand something as a specific instance of a more general case is to have learned a model for understanding other things like it that one may encounter.

At the level of reason we also come to grasp necessary connections between phenomena by contrast to the accidental associations of the imagination (Appendix, p. 150). The laws formulate invariable connections between phenomena. This is also what is needed to understand Nature as it really is. Given that B is the formal cause of A, e. g. extension is the essence of matter, it follows that A cannot be other than extended. Given that X is the efficient cause of Y then given X, Y must follow. That things could not be other than they are is for Spinoza a fundamental feature of Nature implicit in causation. Naess (1974, pp. 10-15) claims that Spinoza does have a notion of logical necessity (Appendix, p. 150). When he says that hatred is increased by being reciprocated he is formulating a proposition about hatred which it would be self-contradictory to deny; likewise when Spinoza states that the free man joins others in friendship. This would be the kind of knowledge acquired in a Spinozan education. According to Spinoza some features of the world are inherently necessary. P must have Q because of P. The necessity for physical things to be extended derives from physical things themselves. Other features have acquired necessity; they must be so given other states of affairs. Curley (1969, p. 116) supports this view. He points out that the essences of things are logically necessary but offers no solution as to how this is consistent with their being dependent on the infinite modes and these in turn on the attributes as this might imply acquired necessity. It was Spinoza's view that logically necessary propositions can have a great deal of content. The curriculum must enable distinctions between kinds of necessity to be made and must enable pupils to overcome their tendency to make associative links between phenomena. It is a radically different approach to that of contemporary education where conventional links are the only ones taught.

The objects of reason are universals of a particular type: "That essence is to be sought only from the fixed and eternal things, and at the same time from the laws inscribed in these things, as in their true codes, according to which all singular things come to be, and are ordered. Indeed these singular, changeable things depend so intimately, and essentially, on the fixed things that they can neither be nor be conceived without them. So although these fixed and eternal things are singular, nevertheless, because of their presence everywhere, and most extensive power, they will be to us like universals, or genera of the definitions of singular, changeable things and the proximate causes of all things"(TDIEs101). Essence is that in the thing which must remain throughout all the changes the thing may undergo so long as it retains its identity. The essence of a thing is that which is necessary to the intelligible identity of that thing: "I say that to the essence of any thing belongs that

which, being given, the thing is necessarily posited and which, being taken away, the thing is necessarily taken away; or that without which the thing can neither be nor be conceived without the thing”(E2D2). In a Spinozan education we must come to understand these essential feature of the whole of Nature and of finite things within, including ourselves. I can proceed from a concrete instance of matter and know the universal essence of these entities which is valid for all experiences of such objects. When I grasp the essential nature of guilt I know its relation to responsibility. In most cases of essential knowledge it is by means of investigating a sample of a given species, e. g. lions, that we can know the general essence. The observation of existing beings plays a foundational role for the cognition of essences and this is one reason why the stage of the imagination is not completely rejected by Spinoza. A Spinozan education must prescind from the contingent to grasp the pure essence.

According to R. Sokolowski (1974, pp. 58-66), on the most primitive level we make judgements attributing similar features to various individuals. We recognise the likeness of one object to another. Such judgements do not transcend the situation in which they occur. They only go beyond the situation in being recognised as associatively like another individual we have experienced. This does not filter out private associations. I may say this dog is like that but such an association is idiosyncratic. My words tell more about myself than the object of my judgements. My view is that this knowledge is the aim of our current system, which is why it is not an education for freedom. It corresponds to Spinoza's universals within the stage of the imagination. What Spinoza is concerned with is giving explanations which explicate the fundamental nature of things. So in science one would explain what a diamond really is. In geometry what a circle is. People often fail to understand the essence of things. There is a tendency to trace a thing back to its finite causes. An understanding of the essence of a thing can never be replaced by a mere knowledge of its external causes. We need to understand what things are. If you encounter someone with a book and you ask someone for its origin then you are not satisfied that he has copied it from someone else etc.: “For I am asking him not only about the form and arrangement of the letters...but also about the thoughts and meaning which their arrangement expresses and this he does not answer by thus going to infinity” (Ep. XL).

In this section I have shown that at this level of reason we are able to attain freedom by forming ideas which are common to all things and could not be other than they are. They also explicate the nature of things whatever the spatio-temporal context. In having these ideas we are developing a self which embodies these same culture transcending features.

## **5. THE EXERCISE OF REASON**

We become free not just in the kind of conception we have of Nature but if this is formed by ourselves (Ch1, p. 21). In this Chapter I showed that in having ideas we are active and exercise some control over our experience. It is only if one has grounds for the beliefs that one exercises real control: “All the clear and distinct



conceptions which we form can only arise from other clear and distinct conceptions which are in us; they acknowledge no other cause outside us. Whence it follows that whatever clear and distinct conceptions we form depend only on our nature...on our absolute power and not on chance”(Ep. XXXVII).

For Spinoza, reason refers not just to a difference between objects of cognition, i.e. eternal features, but a distinction in the way things are studied. By contrast with the level of the imagination, an explanation is given of why the properties of things are ordered as they are, e.g. in order to entertain a true conception of a circle, one must understand *why* a figure is a circle rather than anything else. Ideas are acquired in a planned, orderly, way not gathered up in the situation one is in. We can generate our beliefs and affects, by forming them on the basis of grounds. This will be mainly achieved through knowing the reasons for eternal features of Nature but freedom in relation to the common order is also part of this aim. If one forms beliefs after consideration of evidence one will have some control over them. To be governed by reason is to be governed by considerations that go beyond one's immediate situation. A person may select fruit governed by the thought that eating fruit is beneficial to one. By contrast an animal may select fruit either because it is perceived in its environment and /or it has an impulse to eat. A person in selecting x may consider how it bears on his pursuit of y and despite a strong desire for x may select y instead. A person who is insulted may react at once in a certain way or, alternatively, consider in the light of the insult what further action he might take. In this way his conclusion is not subject to the impact of the immediate situation. He can intervene between the stimulus and response to determine his response and in this way control it. Suppose a person evaluates a newspaper article highly which is written by someone of high repute. If this comes about because the prestige of the author gets transferred to the article then one has no control of one's belief. It is just formed in oneself. A person who has no disposition to consider evidence will be at the mercy of whatever stimuli he happens to encounter. The free person looks to the evidence presented before accepting a conclusion whereas the heteronomous person is influenced by stimuli. According to Spinoza, the unfree person will abandon his views when members of his peer group change theirs. This person's states are functional on the states of others. If others change then automatically he changes: “...he who exults at being esteemed by the multitude. . . strives, sacrifices, and schemes, in order to preserve his reputation. For the multitude is fickle and inconstant...”(E4p58). Talking of the unfree man Spinoza says, “...the man obliged would rather please his benefactor than himself and live after his mind than after his own”(PT 2, 295); “...judgement can be biased in many ways, and to an almost incredible degree, so that while exempt from direct external control it may be so dependent on another man's word, that it may fitly be said to be ruled by him” (TTP XX, 257).

There is a difference between a pupil who will only accept beliefs if they are well-grounded and another who is prepared on his own to read around the subject and seek reasons. A pupil may come to acquire his beliefs passively in that his teacher imparts ideas to him. Even though the pupil will not accept them unless the grounds are adequate he has not played a major part in generating them. One can compare the work of the creative scientist who formulates some theory with the thinking of others who come to accept for good reasons what that scientist has generated. In

education an emphasis on this aspect of freedom would require pupils to undertake projects, formulate data and draw conclusions from that data. It is essential to give pupils a methodology by which they can come to acquire eternal truths for themselves (Ch3, p. 74). This will give one even greater freedom of control.

To have grounds is to understand the process whereby the thing defined comes to be. To understand is to produce. We generate the steps in our mind. To attain the kind of truth that is liberating we must deduce our ideas from other ideas. We must grasp how they follow from ideas necessarily and we must see these ideas as part of a systematic whole. It is not enough that all rational thinkers arrive at a conclusion; it must be done through reasoning. It must follow with necessity from the information given; in the case of self-evident propositions, from the subject. Not only must there be a necessary tie between premise and conclusion; we must recognise it. The transformation of opinion into knowledge involves the tying down of opinions by reasoning, enmeshing them in a context of reasons. Beliefs must be assented to on the basis of understood justification if they are to be liberating; so we must get pupils to grasp the evidence for beliefs. What is essential to reason is that we know that p by inference from something else. To get the 4th proportional we discover the nature of proportion. We deduce a property, namely that the product of the means always equals the product of the extremes. The mind deduces one idea from another only because it follows objectively the pattern of causality in Nature. What Spinoza calls deducing in the TdIE he speaks of as adequate causation by the mind of adequate ideas in the Ethics: "...the best conclusion will have to be drawn from a particular affirmative essence" (TdIEs98).

We must also grasp things as part of a system. The coherence theory of knowledge states that knowledge claims require justification, which is provided by reference to other beliefs, and ultimately by reference to the whole system: "As for order, to unite and order all our perceptions, it is required and reason demands, that we ask...whether there is a certain being...what sort of being it is, which is the cause of all things, so that its objective essence may also be the cause of all our ideas, and then our mind will reproduce Nature as much as possible. For it will have Nature's essence, order, and unity objectively. From this we can see...it is necessary for us always to deduce all our ideas...from real beings, proceeding, as far as possible, according to the series of causes, from one real being to another real being..." (TdIEs99). Finite things have their complete identity grounded in the whole system of Nature: the individual can only be completely understood in the light of the whole system to which it belongs.

The general criterion for the adequacy of an idea, and thus its complete justification, is coherence. Coherence is not mere consistency although inconsistency is the clearest case of incoherence. We only understand what makes x what it is when we grasp it as part of a systematic whole. To see the reason for something is to be aware of each aspect as assimilated within a single whole all of whose parts are inwardly related. For necessary propositions self-consistency is the test. If a proposition is self-consistent it is true. The test for this is whether its opposite is self-contradictory. So 'matter is extended' is true; as to think of it as non-extended would be self-contradictory. Also another test is whether it is part of the nature of x to contain y. With regard to contingent propositions, the test is consistency with

other propositions. In the case of contingent propositions, their sufficiency lies beyond them in other things. Nature as a whole is ultimately the test as it is the ground of things. I must emphasise that, for Spinoza, it is only if coherent beliefs reflect the order of things in Nature that the beliefs are true. A theory is justified if it can explain the rest of what we know. A belief *p* is justified to the extent that it contributes to the coherence of the belief set of which it is a member. Or a proposition is true if it can be shown to follow from what else we know. This is the general principle appealed to. The detailed process shows that the case falls under the principle. A consideration in favour of an idea being justified is that it is comprehensive. Thus the law of gravity is more comprehensive than the kinetic theory of gases. Coherence means that one sees how the laws implied by the wider theory follow from it.

This approach will also apply to eternal features which it is the main aim of the free person to discover. Apart from the ultimate principles all others find their explanation in other eternal features. We know we have the essence of the rose when it can be explicated by reference to the essence of the plant and ultimately by reference to Nature as a whole. There is a link between the process of justification and grasping eternal features, as one has not understood these features if one has not justified them in this way. That an hypothesis is consistent in this way is not sufficient for truth as many could be consistent in this way and yet be false. It is at this point that observation and experiment will play a part. Spinoza does not set out the experimental techniques that may be appropriate. He states that we must use such "Aids, all of which of which serve to help us know how to use our senses and to make, according to certain laws, and in order, the experiments that will suffice to determine the thing we are seeking, so that at last we may infer from them according to what laws of eternal things it was made, and its inmost nature may become known to us"(TdIEs103).

## **6. INTEGRATION OF EXPERIENCE**

Although freedom comes from a knowledge of eternal essences we can become more free in relation to the common order (Ch1, p. 20). Spinoza does say that "In ordinary life we must follow what is most probable, but in philosophical speculations, the truth."(Ep. LVI). "Still the certitude of prophecy remains. . merely moral..."(TPT 2, 29). Nagel (1986, pp. 51-53) points out that the vast majority of additions to what we know do not require any major advance in objectivity, they just add further information at the level that already exists. When someone discovers a previously undetected planet or the chemical composition of a hormone he is filling in a framework of understanding that is already given. Even DNA fits into this as it extended the methods of chemistry into genetics. Discoveries like this may be difficult to make but they don't involve fundamental alterations to our epistemic relation to the world. They add knowledge within a framework and to that extent phenomena are grasped from a less person-centred perspective. This is clearly the condition of our present system, where pupils do acquire more objective beliefs, but only within a limited viewpoint which itself falls short of the liberating objectivity required by Spinoza. A major advance in objectivity requires that the existing forms

of thought should become the object of a new form of understanding. To acquire a more objective understanding of some aspect of life we step back from our initial view, e.g. that things are coloured, and form a new view. The old one comes to be regarded as appearance. Einstein replaced the familiar idea of unqualified temporal and spatial relations between events by a relativistic one according to which objects are not without qualification equal in size but only with respect to a frame of reference. What formerly seemed to be an objective conception of absolute space and time was revealed to be mere appearance. Often an objective advance will involve the recognition that some aspects of our previous understanding belong to the realm of appearances. Instead of conceiving the world as full of coloured objects we conceive it full of objects with primary qualities. The relevance to the issue at hand is that a Spinozan education will try and secure an advance of objectivity within spatio-temporal beliefs but its main focus will be on eternal principles.

We achieve a degree of relative freedom in so far as we integrate our spatio-temporal judgements within comprehensive principles including eternal ones. We then turn our limited judgements into a conception that goes beyond our standpoint, by explaining these processes by the wide ranging laws. We can explain why we see the sun as near to us in terms of universal laws. In so doing we transcend our local position by linking it to this wider framework. We can come to understand how empirical laws manifest eternal process. The process of making butter from milk can be understood in terms of fundamental laws. W. N. A. Klever (1989 p. 178) points out that this is done through motion which separates, disintegrates and reintegrates (Ep. VI). This will transform one's view of Nature as all the laws of Nature can't be inferred from normal experience. We can illustrate this as follows: the natural state of motion for a physical object is motion along a straight line at constant speed. A body in motion will continue forever unless there is a force that stops it. So science explains the familiar in terms of the unfamiliar. Aristotle's idea of motion that it requires the constant application of force is familiar to us in a way that Galileo's is not; as when a ball is thrown up it would continue upwards forever if there were no forces like friction or gravity to slow it down. Before children have acquired the concept of conservation of quantity they will think that when water is emptied into a taller glass the amount of water increases. This is not unlike it being obvious that the sun moves around the earth; or people thinking that plants get their food from the soil rather than sunlight. Common sense thinking about motion is not concerned about the relation between force and velocity. In every day life one is concerned with usefulness not abstract understanding.

This integration of imagination into reason does not entail that one will be explaining events in time, rather one will be interpreting the observable in terms of the more accurate concepts of reason. One will see events as manifestations of laws of Nature. We can explain the law of reflection in terms of the fundamental laws of motion by thinking of light as a tendency towards motion which follows the same laws as does movement; by construing the situation in which a ray of light strikes a flat surface as analogous to that in which a body travelling at a constant velocity strikes a flat hard surface. By understanding laws of optics in terms of eternal laws of motion we are integrating our perceptions into a wider framework.

The achievement of dependable knowledge requires the separation of the logical component of reality so that it can be studied in its pure form, uncontaminated by ever-changing appearances of things. Ordinary knowledge is content to describe these regularities as they happen to occur. A Spinozan education must penetrate into experience to locate the underlying order that produces surface regularity, and must replace the vague entities of sense with precise ideas. We look at a pond and develop an understanding of an ecosystem where balanced internal exchanges of various components occur. The components are mathematical entities consisting of inputs. We can then study the dynamics of the ecosystem. The observed regularities become intelligible as exemplifications of a single mathematical idea. For the most part, in a Spinozan education, we will not explain a particular happening such as an earthquake. This is because we can never follow through the infinite series of finite causes and thus can't be completely free in this kind of explanation; though even here we can become more free the more wide ranging our knowledge of these causes. But we can instead regard this event as an illustration of an unchanging pattern which finds its ultimate explanation in the permanent structure of Nature. For example (J. G. Lennox 1976 p. 495) the birth of a fawn is determined by its parents. The fawn in turn devours foliage affecting insect subsystems. The ecologists see these events as a manifestation of the constant flow of energy maintained in the system. What is important is the balance of motion and rest not the endurance of a part. The parts may come and go without the identity of the whole being affected. We view the death of the fawn; not by looking at particular causes in time, but seeing it as the manifestation of the exchange of energy within a system that aims to preserve its nature by regulating the parts. We need to know what this balance involves.

## **7. INTUITION**

Spinoza has shown what we must know to attain freedom. His theory of intuition advances this further. Curley (1979, p. 57) says that in the Ethics reason is of universal ideas, intuition of particulars (E5p36cs). But this ignores E5p25 where intuitive knowledge proceeds from an adequate idea of certain attributes of Nature to an adequate knowledge of the essence of things. Curley (1979, pp. 54-55) says that in the TdIE intuition is direct and reason inferential. Yet in the Ethics it does involve inference (E2p47s). I agree with Parkinson (1964, p. 184) that in the TdIE the discovery of the fourth proportional is made without any operation, but this need only mean that there is no application of a rule and this does not imply it is not inferential.

S. Carr (1978, p. 245ff) denies that the distinction hinges on a contrast between their objects. Instead it depends where you start. Intuition starts from the essence of an attribute and proceeds to a knowledge of the essence of things. Reason starts from finites and infers from them. But there are problems with Carr's view. The conclusion, in E5p36cs, derives from the mind's essence, not from the knowledge of an attribute. Yet this proposition illustrates intuition.

We must find a more accurate contrast. One element of intuition is that it involves seeing things at a glance. Spinoza illustrates this with mathematics. Given three numbers we need to find a fourth. We apply the rule  $N = YxZ/X$ . At the level of imagination we apply the rule because we trust someone. At the level of reason we know the rule on the basis of having deduced it from mathematical fundamentals. At the level of intuition the inference does not make conscious use of rules. According to Parkinson (1983, pp. 66-67), in the case of reason we have reasons for the rule. We start with a general rule and apply it to the situation. In the case of intuition we immediately see that the conclusion follows. We can reject a contradiction as false without formulating the proposition that 'p and not p' must be false. The knowledge of the general principle has not been separated out from the particular. We do not always need to appeal to the general rule. I know the general rule in the particular. We don't return hatred with hatred because it manifests the general rule, but grasp this maxim immediately. Intuition involves grasping a chain of reasoning without having to go through each step in the chain. It would also involve being able to apply principles to particular situations instantly. One would be able to analyse a problem without having to decide which of the possible principles may apply to it, as one would recognise instantly which ones do apply. This is the kind of thinking we must develop. A demonstration takes you from premises to a conclusion where you can see that each step is valid. The acts of mind in which the validity of the steps is recognised are intuitions: "Given the numbers 1, 2, and 3, no one fails to see that the fourth proportional is 6-and we see this much more clearly because we infer the fourth number from the ratio which, in one glance, we see the first number to have from the second" (E2p40s2); "But mathematicians know by the force of the demonstration of proposition 19 in book VII of Euclid, which numbers are proportional to one another, from the nature of proportion, and its property, viz., that the product of the first and fourth numbers is equal to the product of the second and third. Nevertheless, they do not see the adequate proportionality of the given numbers. And if they do, they see it not by the force of that proposition, but intuitively, without going through any procedure"(TdIEs24). Intuition embraces in one single grasp the totality of causes that generate things. Through this the person internalises the immanent causality of Nature and participates in the absolute freedom of Nature. Reason can't present such a concrete reality as it sees Nature as composed of serially connected laws.

The second element has to do with the object of intuition. This refers to a cognition of a particular or the capacity for cognising particulars (E5p36cs). According to Bennett (1984, pp. 366-367), reason lacks the capacity to link up general knowledge with the concrete particulars of everyday experience. This looks like the Kantian claim that intuitions without concepts are blind. It gives an adequate knowledge of the essence of things. One follows in detail the deduction of things from God. It is less abstract than reason, which lacks the immediate grasp of essences. According to Hallett (1930, p. 96), the essential thing about intuition is not knowledge of abstractions but of real things flowing necessarily from Nature. I now see Nature through particular essences. Previously I knew that Nature must be expressed as particulars, but this is abstract.

The third element involves a kind of experience. Intuition encompasses not only eternal ideas but the intellectual love of Nature. In E5 Spinoza associates intuitive

knowledge with a heightened awareness of not only things but oneself and God. Spinoza states: "The greatest striving of the Mind, and its greatest virtue is understanding things by the third kind of knowledge"(E5p25); "So he who knows things by this kind of knowledge passes to the greatest human perfection..."(E5p27Dem). He states that he wishes to show "...how much the knowledge of singular things I have called intuitive knowledge....can accomplish, and how much more powerful it is than the universal knowledge I have called knowledge of the second kind"(E5p36cs). Man does not become Nature; he remains a mode. But when a person cognises himself and other modes through their first cause he feels and experiences it in him and participates in its freedom. Bennett (1984, p. 368) says that Spinoza does not explain why intuition is superior. Yet what I have just said does so. As Yovel says (1989b, p. 164), there is no more information but it is interiorised. When the pupil starts from the idea he then accomplishes the same thing that Nature does when it lets its creations go forth out of the whole. As long as the person does not feel the working and creating of the idea his thinking remains separated from living nature. For intuition it is not enough that one cognises the general contents of definitions, axioms and propositions which explain how the essence of man is determined by the essence of Nature. The person must feel and experience it. If this is lacking the cognition can only be of the second kind. Sensation gives rise to immediate, felt, contact with objects. The same objects are presented to reason but we have propositional connections between ideas. The price paid for subsuming these ideas under universal functions is the loss of immediacy. Intuition restores the immediacy of feeling and thus logico-causal connections are concretised. Joachim says (1901, pp. 182-3) that it aims at restoring the living individuality of imaginative experience at a higher level, where the certainty of scientific demonstration unites with the immediacy and concreteness of perception. So it combines the best features of sense experience and reason. If perception predominates in a person then he gets stuck at what is individual; he can't penetrate into the deeper foundations of reality. If abstract thinking predominates in him then his concepts seem insufficient to understand the living fullness of what is real. We must ascend to the highest truths without losing the feeling for living experience. We should let the stream of things flow through ourselves. We will not stand above things in order to think about them, but will delve into their depths and raise out of them what lives and works within them. This joy from knowledge is far from what we have in the current education system. There, if knowledge is to be made enjoyable, it is through making it relevant to pupil's lives by connecting it to their current interests(Ch5, p. 118). Spinoza's account restores to knowledge its role of liberating pupils through a lived experiential union with Nature; where one's transcendence is felt as joy (Ch4, p. 89).

The fourth element is self-knowledge. I agree with H. De Djin (1990, p. 151) who says that at this level we understand ourselves as involved in Nature. The aim is "...the knowledge of the union that the mind has with the whole of Nature"(TdIEs13). The third kind of knowledge is, though not exclusively, a form of self-knowledge. What intuition gives me is my detailed and concrete realisation that I exist in Nature and that Nature exists through me. I enjoy a timeless necessity in the midst of duration. Intuition "...proceeds from an adequate idea of the formal essence of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essence of things"(E2p40s2). It is only after I have investigated how my essence is determined

by the universe at large that I can interiorise this knowledge and become aware in one grasp how I exist in Nature. This in combination with the self-experience of the knower produces a cosmic religious emotion. At this point the knower relates himself as a singular entity to Nature. Men are "...in the power of God Himself as clay in the hand of the potter, who from the same lump makes vessels, some unto honour, others unto dishonour" (Ep. LXXV).

We have here ideas which have formed part of this thesis: our unity with others, the idea of gradations in being, our connection to the creative power of Nature. It is this experience, in combination with general metaphysical truths, which leads to intuitive knowledge of our inherence as an eternal essence in Nature. In time we experience ourselves outside time.

I think there is one other element in intuition. A can be deduced from B and C because A is defined in terms of B and C. It is because Cheerfulness is defined in terms of Joy (E3p11s) that, knowing joy to be good, we can deduce that cheerfulness is good. I suggest that all of this will be an operation of reason; but that cheerfulness can't be excessive may not be deducible in this way. This involves an insight into things from which we can work out what they involve. This would fit into a view of intuition where a person can sense that something is wrong without inferring this in steps from some premise. This kind of deduction is what is needed, in a Spinozan education, to work out the kind of implications of the nature of things which I expound in my account of Goethe (Ch3, p. 68). It is conveyed when we say that someone has an insight into things. I will have more to say about intuition in connection with self-knowledge and the love of Nature (Ch4, pp. 83, 89).

## **8. ETERNITY**

Spinoza also claims that the mind can attain to eternity. He states: "...we feel and know by experience that we are eternal...our mind, insofar as it involves the essence of the body under a species of eternity, is eternal, and that this existence it has cannot be defined by time or explained through duration"(E5p23s); "...human Bodies...can be of such a nature that they are related to Minds which have a great knowledge of themselves and of God and of which the greatest, or chief part is eternal..."(E5p39s). I will show how this is an advance in freedom. I will consider some other interpretations of eternity later (Appendix, p. 151).

The mind is constituted by ideas. If they are eternal the mind is eternal. We can do something to increase that part of the mind that is eternal and attain freedom. According to Delahunty (1985, p. 302), when we form adequate ideas we are bringing it about that our minds reproduce the order which ideas have in the infinite intellect of God. Our minds come to mirror the divine intellect. The more our adequate knowledge extends the more Godlike our minds become: "But this true knowledge is also distinguished according to the objects presented to it. So the better the object with which it comes to unite itself, the better is this knowledge. And therefore the most perfect man is the one who unites with the most perfect being, God, and thus enjoys him"(ST 2, IV). This assimilation of knower to known is made easier if we conceive the infinite intellect as an impersonalised body of knowledge which can be displayed in the form of an axiomatised deductive system. Our minds



then can be conceived as parts of this comprehensive order. We can form adequate ideas and deduce theorems from them; and to the extent that this is possible we can conform our minds to the intellect of God. The greater the number of adequate ideas we possess, the greater is the part of the mind which is identical with the divine mind.

G. Lloyd's (1986, pp. 211-231) view elucidates what Spinoza means by eternity and why this is an advance in freedom. According to Lloyd, the mind draws its reality from the object of its love. If the mind loves something weak and transitory it will be the same. But it can attach itself to stronger objects. In the *Ethics* the mind does not shift its attention away from finites to Nature; rather in the light of Nature it comes to a new perception of finites themselves. These are now seen under the form of eternity. One can view something as timeless if one sees that it is the case that, say, given certain conditions roses will always appear red. The redness of the rose is transmuted into a timeless truth in this way. Lloyd says that the body's being what it is depends on its being enmeshed in an ever more comprehensive individual stretching up to the whole universe. The proportion of motion and rest in a body depends on its inclusion in wider wholes. What is novel is that these wider systems are themselves individuals. We interact causally with the rest of nature and are dependent for our existence and identity on that interaction. There is a larger order to which man belongs. Man can only become himself when connected to this order (Ch4, p. 103). We attain a character which emulates the features of Nature: "Our Mind, in so far as it understands, is an eternal mode of thinking, which is determined by another eternal mode of thinking, and this again by another and so on to infinity; so that together, they all constitute God's eternal and infinite intellect" (E5p40s).

Delahunty (1985, 301) points out that we can become eternal by acquiring more ideas (E5p38Dem). This is also the implication of E5p23. The importance of this is that part of being free is that one acquires one's states for oneself; and if eternity is to represent an advance in freedom we must be able to attain this through our efforts (Ch1, p. 21). But E5p23 entails that the eternal part of the mind takes the formal essence of an individual as its object; how can that become greater in response to our activities? Delahunty concludes that this is a real inconsistency. According to D. Steinberg (1981 p. 67), the mind comes to understand things; which is a process that comes to be in time. How can this be done by an eternal thing? Spinoza is aware that the eternity of a part of a mind entails it can't change in any respect (E5p33). W. Matson (1990, p. 92) provides a solution. The proto-mind is the idea of the genetic code, except that this is an eternal essence and not one subject to space and time through evolution (Ch3, p. 72). This is what has been proved eternal in E5p23. We can't infer that no more remains. This proto-mind can develop. It is the idea of a body with a mind that can think various ideas. Some of the ideas correspond to the interaction of the body with other bodies and will correspond to the first kind of knowledge. But other ideas will be adequate. (It is this proto-mind that I identified with man's essence (Ch1, p. 35)). The proto-mind is constituted by few ideas. But it can connect up and incorporate into its being the truth about things. We can do something, while existing in duration, to increase the extent of the mind that is eternal (E5p39s, E5p42s). This conception is also supported by J. I. Friedman (1977, pp. 64-69). This counters Bennett (1984, p. 362) who finds it unintelligible that something is eternal and capable of increase.

## **CHAPTER 3 - THE CONTENT OF AN EDUCATION FOR FREEDOM**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter Two I explained the general character of a free mind. It is this character that people are striving to attain when not deflected by their culture into pursuits which alienate them. It is this end that forms the aim of an education for freedom. The free person understands universal principles which give the essence of things; he forms these ideas for himself by deducing them from others, and ultimately from a first principle, giving a complete account of things being the way they are. Of itself this gives limited guidance, as one must know what these features are and how things are placed in Nature as whole. Any kind of content will not do. It will have to be of a certain sort and Spinoza provides an account of what this is. This content is not just to be transmitted to pupils, but sets out objectives which the pupil should eventually acquire for themselves. We must understand Nature and ourselves in terms of the content outlined here if we are to realise our nature as free beings. By understanding ourselves and Nature in these terms we can in our finite existence approximate to Nature as a whole. Spinoza shows that Nature is the only substance. This is the basis of his monism, and of the assertion of an integration of Nature which it will be the aim of an education for freedom to comprehend (Appendix, p. 153). Everything is understood as a part of Nature (Appendix, p. 154). I will show that to understand Nature as it is in itself we must comprehend it in mechanistic (Section 1) and organic terms (S2). We must also understand how particular things stand in Nature (S3). To become free we will need to acquire a method to help us form ideas for ourselves (S4).

Absolute freedom is attained by knowing fundamental concepts and principles. Relative freedom is attained when we integrate the common order into these principles and when we attain a higher state of control through being in possession of a method which frees us from dependence on others for our knowledge (Ch1, p. 20).

### **1. MATHEMATICS AND PHYSICS**

Spinoza could be interpreted as stating that the fundamental nature of Nature is mathematical, from which it follows that only those physical concepts that can be characterised in quantitative terms give an accurate representation of reality. We must explain the world revealed by the senses in mathematical terms. We must be broken of the assumption that sense objects are the real objects. The real or primary qualities are number, figure, magnitude. Spinoza's conception of Nature is one of atoms equipped with mathematical features, moving according to laws described in mathematical form. We must formulate laws that state the behaviour of phenomena in quantitative terms. One must isolate those aspects of natural phenomena which are capable of measurement and related by mathematical laws. These features are velocity, force and energy. The laws are not studied because they are useful but because they reveal this fundamental structure, which is mathematical. A Spinozan education would place a mathematical treatment of subjects at the centre of the

curriculum, not because it has useful consequences in enabling one to improve travelling speeds on British Rail but because one ascends to a perspective of Nature free of all influence from one's particular stand-point. The virtues of mathematics are as follows: it deals with the essence and properties of things; it deals with necessity and demonstration; it is the model of proper order beginning with clearest and simplest ideas. Spinoza says philosophy must not draw conclusions from abstractions but only from an affirmative essence. So we must keep this in mind when studying mathematics.

As F. Biasutti says (1990, p. 61), explaining Nature as it is in itself means developing our knowledge of it on the basis of notions such as motion and rest which penetrate the essence of natural phenomena. As we progress along the scale of things no new physical qualities appear which can't be analysed in terms of motion and rest. Extension can be understood as physical energy. This expresses itself in the infinite mode of motion and rest. Extension can be seen as a power to produce motion and rest: "...all the effects which we see depend necessarily on extension must be attributed to this attribute, e. g., Motion and Rest. For if the power to produce these effects were not in Nature, it would be impossible for them to be able to exist...when we consider extension alone, we perceive nothing else in it except motion and rest, from which we find that all its effects derive"(ST. 2, XIX). According to D. Savan (1986, p. 105), "Every extended mode-a storm, a specimen of nitre, a human body-is a direct radiation of the infinite and eternal activity of extension and the adequate idea of that mode must explain it through active extension and those features which are universal and necessary to that attribute". According to Klever (1989, p. 178), for Spinoza, things are heavy or light according to movements of their parts. Solids have their origin in surrounding powers which force them to be as they are. Bodies are what they are because the stuff from which they are composed has a different quantity of internal motion and speed in relation to other bodies. Things are distinguished by a number. In Klever's words, "Aren't we very near to the atom number of modern physics?"; "Centuries before quantum mechanics...the mathematical genius Spinoza had already made the framework for it" (Ibid, p. 185). Matson (1990, p. 88) says that element 16 is that unique proportion of motion and rest that gives the essence of sulphur. From this essence follows, with the essence of other things, the truth of such statements as that if there is hydrogen around sulphur will combine with it. Atomic numbers are the specifications of proportions of motion and rest of things. Spinoza's conceptual scheme has a place for the periodic law. Matson says this is a vindication of a priori method in science.

One can understand the unity of Nature in terms of field concepts. (It should of course be said that Spinoza does not do so; but this is an interpretation one can place on the attributes and a possible content in a Spinozan curriculum). According to F. Capra (1981, p. 134), the quantum field is the fundamental physical entity: a continuous medium present everywhere in space. Particles are merely local condensations of the field, concentrations of energy which come and go dissolving into the underlying field. According to the field theory of matter, a particle is a small domain of the electrical field within which the field strength assumes high values; indicating that a huge field energy is concentrated in a small space.

In order to be freer within the common order, we must explain the changing properties of things in terms of these fundamental processes. A ball is dropped from a person's hand. We express it in quantitative terms. Galileo said that the number of feet which the ball falls in  $t$  seconds is 16 times the square of the number of seconds. In 3 seconds the ball falls  $16 \times 3^2$ . From one value – time – the other variable – distance – can be calculated. The formula gives quantitative information on how the ball falls. When we subject any case of motion to mathematical treatment we analyse it into certain units of distance covered in certain units of time. Kepler was motivated by a faith in the fundamentally mathematical nature of reality. The behaviour of the planets manifests mathematical harmony, and it was this that led him to search for mathematical formulae which would account for the actual behaviour of objects in the solar system.

The common sense view, which is propagated by the current educational system, is that we perceive things as they really are allowing for corrections. In a Spinozan education, we would be able to investigate Nature in terms of how it actually is rather than in terms of its effects on us. One knows that the sky one sees at night with the stars is not as it appears, as it depends on the particular circumstances in which one is observing it. Also in different parts of the world the sky would look different. From this one may conclude that one's perception is due to subjective factors. The perception of colour is due to the interaction of causally more basic properties of the world, and the same goes for the other properties we perceive. We do make a distinction between the real and apparent colour or taste of a thing. But this is a distinction within appearance by reference to experiences taken as standard. To suffer an illusion is for your colour experience not to match that of a normal perceiver in normal conditions. Spinoza's account is more radical than this as it implies that all perceptual judgements are subjective.

According to P. M. Churchland (1979, pp. 7-45), perception is a theory of nature and must be replaced by a better one. I would suggest his views are in sympathy with Spinoza's philosophy. Any perceptual judgement is an instance of a general mode of conceptual exploitation that may be inappropriate to reality. Churchland cites the following example: suppose that on viewing a hot object, e.g. a fire, some people have a sensation of whiteness, while on viewing a cold object, e.g. ice, they have a sensation of blackness. If we insist that 'black' and 'white' refer to colours, then we must say that on viewing a hot object they have what we would describe as a sensation of whiteness. They, of course, would say they have sensations of heat. If we say that the meaning of simple observation terms is given in sensation, then we must insist that when they experience what we call 'white', they are experiencing colour; and that when they say that food keeps better in a cold place they must mean a black place. So the meaning of the observation terms has nothing to do with whatever sensations happen to prompt empirical judgements. Now sensations of colour don't give information on objects, as objects are not coloured intrinsically. What we take them to be depends on education, as we take some sensations to be a colour, others temperature. The quality of the sensation is irrelevant to what properties one perceives the world as displaying, as the same sensation is taken for colour by us and heat by others.

Certainly Spinoza would agree with Churchland's approach. He would also agree that our sensations are those of the presence and spatial disposition of local molecular aggregates. The normal sensations of warmth and coldness are reliable indicators of the mean kinetic energy of the constituent molecules. Our auditory sensations are indicators of compression wave trains in the atmosphere, their wavelength and frequency. Visual sensations are indicators of the dominant wavelength of incoming radiation and the reflective properties of the molecular aggregates from which they come. Our colour sensations are indicators of the mean kinetic energy of constituent molecules. Let us suppose a culture whose common sense conception of reality is the conception embodied in modern physical theory. Where we learn 'loud noise' they learn 'large amplitude atmospheric compression wavelength.' Where we learn 'sour' they learn 'has a high relative concentration of hydrogen ions'. What begins as a set of stimulus response patterns gets progressively articulated and refined as people acquire theoretical knowledge. There is a perceptual transformation. They do not sit on the beach and listen to the steady roar of the surf. They listen to the a-periodic atmospheric compression waves. They do not observe the western sky redden as the sun sets. They observe the wavelength distribution of incoming solar radiation shift to longer wavelengths. They don't feel objects grow cooler with the onset of darkness. They feel the molecular kinetic energy of common aggregates dwindling.

Churchland shows that if we tilt our view we can see the planets as the Copernican theory describes it. A substantial transformation in the processing of visual information is achieved once one learns to see the world this way. This is what it would be, for Spinoza, to view Nature at the stage of intuition. It shows that the value of what Spinoza calls the imagination is that it enables one to be in touch with the operation of eternal laws in so far as we can explain and experience our sense data in the way just described. This contrasts with how Warnock would value the senses (Ch5, p. 123). Spinoza's view is that the common sense conception is a narrower conception of reality, representing reality partially as it seems to us. As Hampshire notes (1977, p. 63), the thinking of a man with a knowledge of astronomy when he looks at the setting sun is different from that of the simple person. We must assist the concepts used in common sense to evolve towards their counterparts in science. We would teach correspondence rules for the redefinition of the expressions of the less adequate to the more adequate.

## **2. NATURE AS ORGANISM**

For Spinoza, Nature must also be understood in organic terms. This is a conception of Nature which is not conditioned by one's membership of a particular culture. In what follows reference will be made to finite things and it may appear that understanding Nature in organic terms will not enable us to attain absolute freedom (Ch1, p. 20). But to understand Nature in organic terms is to know it in terms that are completely independent of any standpoint. It is a framework for understanding things which reflects Nature as it really is apart from any perspective. When we apply this framework to the changing properties of things in the common order then we are becoming more free in the relative sense as we are integrating our experiences of

the common order into an eternal framework. I will set out what this framework is, illustrating it from time to time with examples of particular things. One law is that the organic system tends to preserve itself. Another is that a natural system is organised hierarchically. Another is that resources are distributed to maintain the stability of the system. This means that materials must be recycled, the waste materials serving as raw materials for others. Recycling is necessary to avoid accumulation in any given area. During photosynthesis carbon is extracted from carbon dioxide and oxygen is released for another process, the breathing by animals.

From the standpoint of the imagination we mistakenly view things as unrelated or drawn into chance relations. Through reason we can rise above this and see things as they belong to a world order. Understanding this liberates us from a perspective that conditions us to see Nature as consisting of independent, transitory units. *Naturata* is an infinite whole composed of infinitely many parts ranging from the highest to the lowest each in its special degree reflecting the whole (Harris, 1965 p. 467). Nature can be understood as a concrete universal: a totality that is universal in that it determines the character of all its members by the principle of structure that constitutes them as a whole. "...we shall easily conceive that the whole of nature is one Individual, whose parts, i. e., all bodies vary in infinite ways, without any change of the whole Individual" (E2p13L7s). The basic paradigm is that of an organism, an organised whole of interrelated and mutually supportive parts functioning as a cohesive unit.

Just as finite things are individuated by form so is Nature as a whole: "...we shall easily conceive that the whole of nature is on Individual, whose parts, i.e., all bodies vary in infinite ways, without any change of the whole Individual" (Ibid). Furthermore, Nature as a whole can be understood as a hierarchy of organic forms with one finite region as a part of another. "...we see how a composite Individual can be affected in many ways and still preserve its nature...But if we should now conceive of another, composed of a number of Individuals of a different nature we shall find it can be affected in a great many other ways and still preserve its nature...if we should further conceive a third kind of Individual composed of many individuals of this second kind, we shall find that it can be affected in many other ways, without a change of its form" (Ibid).

Spinoza's account may be seen to be similar to that of the eastern mystics. They are concerned with the direct experience of an undifferentiated nature; a direct experience of reality which transcends intellectual thinking and sensory perception. This is the experience of all phenomena in the world as being manifestations of a basic oneness. All things are seen as interdependent and inseparable parts of this cosmic whole. In ordinary life we are not aware of this unity but divide the world into separate objects. This is one of the legacies of the educational system.

Spinoza regards Nature as an active force. Referring to the worm in the blood stream Spinoza says: "...he could not know how all the parts are controlled by the universal nature of blood and are forced, as the universal nature of blood demands, to adapt themselves to one another, so as to harmonise with one another and in a certain way" (Ep. XXXII); "With regard to whole and parts, I consider things as parts of some whole, in so far as their natures are mutually adapted so that they are

in accord among themselves as far as possible..."(Ibid). Nature as a whole has a universal providence in that it regulates all the systems within it to maintain its identity and can be seen as a vast ecosystem: "...we posit a universal and a particular Providence. The universal is that through which each thing is produced and maintained in so far as it is part of the whole of Nature. The particular Providence is that striving which each particular thing has for the preservation of its being in so far as it is considered not as a part of Nature but as a whole...All man's limbs are provided and cared for in so far as they are parts of man: That is the universal providence. The particular is that striving that each particular limb (as a whole, not as a part of man) has to preserve and maintain its own well-being" (ST 1, V). It is also intrinsic to nature to generate ever more complex systems composed of further systems. Each system will have its own striving and it will be regulated by the striving of the whole. In a deer the rate of growth of the antlers decreases when a precise relationship between the weight of the antler and the body weight of the deer is established. In adopting this framework we are rising above the common order, as it is a conception completely independent of any culture.

#### SPINOZA'S VIEW OF FINITE ORGANISMS

"The striving by which each thing strives to persevere in its being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing"(E3p7). This may be understood as follows: Firstly, that all things will resist whatever threatens them. This resistance can take the form of an adjustment to stimuli, which will serve to maintain the identity of the object impinged on by stimuli. Secondly, finite things will seek out in their environment whatever enables them to maintain their identity. Third, finite things have a tendency to develop into more complex wholes, e. g. in the development of a seed into a plant. The form of a thing strives to maintain and promote itself. On this conatus Spinoza says it "...is nothing but that striving we find both in the whole of Nature and in particular things, tending to maintain and preserve their being...each thing in itself has a striving to preserve itself in its state, and bring itself to a better one " (ST 1, V). According to Steinberg (1984, pp. 317-320), the human body exemplifies Spinoza's concept of a complex individual. Its parts are governed by laws of homeostasis such that when certain sorts of externally induced changes occur in one part other balancing changes occur in another. The essence of the heart is partially constituted by its relation to other parts. The nature of the whole partly constitutes the parts. So every part of the body possesses the nature of the whole in common with every other part. We are looking at an ecosystem, a unit defined in terms of a balance of activities among the subsystems that make it up. Each sub-unit is defined by the balance of activities among its members, those activities working to maintain the system.

Spinoza's account can be understood in part through Goethe's ur-phenomenon which is called the Type. The account which follows can be found in R. Steiner (1968, 1988.). The Urpflanze is the original plant from which all others are derived. All the varieties of plant are derived from one original formation as the result of a transformation brought about by the responsiveness of the organism to the environment. This responsiveness is a creative conversation between within and without. We understand things as manifestations of something within and master

them in their wholeness. The interest is on the inner principle which determines the organisation of living forms. It is supposed that the character of a certain species can be deduced from external conditions. The conditions will have an influence but the creative cause is the inner principle. A Spinozan education would concentrate on discovering this inner principle which gives the essence of the thing. A species evolves under the influence of this or that fact to develop an organ. Suppose that an organ had essential features ABC. It evolves so its features assume the form A1, B1, C1 under the influence of external conditions but the specific nature of it can't be derived from these influences. The Type manifests itself through all the stages of the organic world. The number of formations it can assume is unlimited. Every organism is the moulding of the Type in a special form. We can form an idea which does not reflect the influence of the outer world but only answers to the inner principle. The organism alters itself to meet each influence and selects a response appropriate to its own nature. The same tree planted at tree-line, on high slopes, or on valley floors will present three different shapes but each will be a modification of the characteristic form. Any individual organism manifests a constant identity through whatever local modifications it is forced to make. The Type is a-historical but historical influences will modify its productions and when we study these productions we must treat them as self-modifications of a constant entity responding to historical conditions. At the level of intuition we grasp this principle immediately and see how it shapes its parts (Ch2, p. 58). The ultimate reality of the universe lies not in particles or laws governing their interaction but in the archetypes. We need a restructuring of one's cognitive capacities to experience the types as active forces in nature.

An insight into Spinoza's conception of essence can be derived from F. Amrine (1987, pp. 303-318) who cites the work of Bockemühl. We can discern from simple leaf forms an elementary grammar of form-creating processes, which is then applied to ever more complicated leaf series. The contour of any leaf can be seen as a function of the intensity, timing and duration of four activities in interaction with the others: shooting (extends the leaf tip outward), articulating (multiple apices), spreading (filling in of leaf plane), stemming (growth at the base of leaf which extends it from the main stem). These work through the leaf. The typus of the plant is not identified with a single static form. All four activities manifest themselves in the developing foliage leaves of every plant. The modes of their interaction are infinitely varied. Each variation creates distinctive features by which the species identify themselves. The essence of leaf development lies in the nexus of these four interpenetrating activities. In *Valerianella locusta* spreading and stemming predominate. Each variation creates characteristic motifs which identify the species. After we have mastered these elements and others in the development of the leaf we learn to read the development of foliage leaves within the context of the leaf development in its entirety. What matters is to gain this as an experience (Ch2, p. 59), and this requires practice in studying plant life. We must come to see the essence manifesting itself within and through empirical phenomena. Spinoza says the essence of finite objects is given in terms of form. What makes a particular individual the individual it is is a relationship among its parts: "When a number of bodies...communicate their motions to each other in a certain fixed manner, we shall say that these bodies are united with one another and that they all together compose one body or Individual which is distinguished from the others by this union of



bodies”(E2p13L3A2Def); “If the parts composing an Individual become greater or less, but in such a proportion that they keep the same ratio of motion and rest to each other as before, then the individual will likewise retain its nature, as before, without any change in form”(E2p13L5). Spinoza's proof of the thesis of form is: “...bodies are not distinguished in respect of substance: what constitutes the form of the Individual consists in the union of the bodies ”(E2p13L4Dem).

The individual changes are the various expressions of the archetypal organism that has within itself the ability to take on manifold shapes most suited to the conditions in the outer world. The contribution of Spinoza's philosophy to education is that one is to study the eternal form of finite things and see how it is part of a wider form. We have the essence of the rose which also embodies the essence of the plant and is shaped by that essence. Just as every particular plant bears the imprint of the essence of the plant type, so all finite things bear the imprint of the unity of the whole of Nature. This gives a different perspective on ecological studies. We are not just studying how members of a forest affect other members; we are more concerned with the eternal form of things. It is by a study of these that we attain absolute freedom.

### ORGANIC EXAMPLES

According to Harris (1965, p. 267), teleological explanation is explanation of parts in terms of a whole, or of processes in terms of a dynamic system to which they belong, which they are maintaining or which is being generated through them, where the principle of organisation of such a system is the governing and directing principle of the processes to be explained. So, in the growth of a conifer we have a typical organisation governing its growth; the branches grow more slowly than the trunk, but the rate of growth is maintained in a constant ratio so that the conical shape of the tree which results remains constant. If the top of the central shoot is cut off, one of the lateral arms swings up to take its place and its rate of growth increases. Here we have a typical organisation governing the process, reasserting itself when disturbed and maintaining its structure by regulating its constituent factors. We need to know the character of the whole before we can know the parts. They look and behave differently outside a whole. The dominance of the whole in time makes living activity holistic in at least three ways: (1) The organism adjusts itself to external pressures. This enables the organism to maintain itself in a wider range of environmental conditions. (2) There is prolepsis, the anticipation in one phase of what will occur later. In mammals pregnant mothers supply deficiencies in the foetus at the expense of their own bodies. (3) Living activity is directed towards the completion of a specific whole. Holism is pervasive throughout the world and all relations obtaining between real existents and their parts are internal. In the case of a circle, the equidistance from the centre of all points on the circumference determines all the properties of the circle, e.g. the relation of its radius to its circumference, the equality of the angles subtended at the circumference by any chord. Apart from the primary principle these properties are absent. Each one expresses and involves this principle. The solar system is determined by the law of gravity which determines the movements of each of its component bodies. A scientific theory is itself a principle or organisation systematising facts within a field of experience. It formulates laws that

determine and interrelate the facts. It is the influence of the structural principle that makes the distinguishable and diverse elements what they are, that determines their relations to one another and adjusts each one of them reciprocally to every other.

According to J. E. Lovelock (1979), the biosphere is the living world with its geological substrata. Living things in taking up carbon dioxide and emitting oxygen are creating that combination of the two gases in the atmosphere required for maintaining life on our planet. They are also creating conditions favourable to life when generating methane or taking up gases surplus to the requirements of life. Lovelock's thesis is that living things could not create the atmospheric conditions they require if they were not organised to constitute a single cybernetic system-the biosphere. The adaptive strategies are all geared to maintaining the stability of the entire Gaian hierarchy. These examples show what would be studied in a Spinozan education. We can deepen our grasp of Spinoza's position by examining the theories of Naess.

### ECOLOGY

According to Naess (1990, pp. 53-63), if we concentrate on finding within each discovered relation a mirror of the larger structure, our total views are hinted at with every single thing we have a complete explanation of. We should not believe that our view of the larger whole will be made clearer through gaining more information. What is needed is a reorientation in thinking so that we will recognise the defining relations of one thing with other things.

In seeking this relational understanding we will be engaging in Deep Ecology, a notion which Naess defines in contrast to Shallow Ecology. We are engaging only in Shallow Ecology when we undertake empirical studies with an instrumental end in view, e.g., in the fight against pollution. In Deep Ecology we reject this instrumental view of the man in the environment in favour of seeking a relational total field image.

Within the deep ecological approach we will be grasping intrinsic relations between a and b, such that these relations belong to the definitions of a and b. Without these relations a and b would not be what they are. This point can be illustrated from the realm of the arts. Our experience of the second movement of Beethoven's sonata *pathétique* is a genuine whole in itself. The experience of each tone will be influenced by the whole movement, while each movement in turn is a whole which is subordinate to the complete sonata. So we have a complex realm of gestalts in a hierarchy. It is a feature of such complex gestalts that they are destroyed by attempts to analyse fragments of them consciously.

At this point we may wonder whether Spinoza's position is indeed captured by Naess's Deep Ecology. For in some respects Spinoza does favour a mechanistic approach and this means that analysis would have a part in a Spinozan education. While this is true, I would maintain that analysis would be undertaken, not as an end in itself, but only within the aim of grasping the whole

### HOLISM AND THE CURRICULUM

Education has emphasised a fragmented approach to studying nature, in which the learner is separate from nature and there is a focus on understanding what is external. A Spinozan education would emphasise synthesis and integration. The observers and observed would be connected. A holistic world view calls for a re-conceptualisation of what it means to be a healthy human being. Real health involves increasing our awareness of the interconnectedness of body and mind and between ourselves, the rest of human kind and our environment. The western world has disregarded the connectedness of things. Pupils learn that human experience can be carved up into separate parts, e. g. humanities, technology and science. At school one's intellectual development is promoted in academic lessons, bodily health in PE, emotional development in pastoral lessons. Fragmentation should not be confused with the act of division of an area of knowledge into particular fields of specialisation or with the abstraction of specific problems for study. Fragmentation arises when an attempt is made to impose divisions in an arbitrary fashion, without regard for a wider context even to the point of ignoring connections to the rest of the world. Indeed the study of any field begins with the natural act of abstraction, focusing on certain features of interest. To be able to give attention to it, it is necessary to isolate its main features from the infinite complexity of its background. Science has developed into a number of general areas such as physics, chemistry and biology. Each discipline involves highly specific areas of knowledge. Science is becoming more and more specialised. An individual scientist may spend a lifetime working in a particular narrow field and never come to encounter the wider context of his or her subject. The idea of a discipline is that the information in it is independent of other disciplines. But the implication of Spinoza's thought is that knowledge cannot be subdivided into separate compartments without losing its unity.

In a Spinozan education, to see the reason for something would be to be aware of each aspect assimilated in the whole. Our language tends to obscure this unity. As D. Bohm (1980, pp. 41-47) points out, we must take a mode of language in which movement is primary. The subject-verb-object form of language implies an inappropriate division between things. Divisions implied by the language structure are then projected as if they were fragments corresponding to actual breaks in nature.

That a Spinozan education will be holistic is true, but of itself this does not completely bring out its distinctive nature. The study will primarily not be of empirical systems. We will study the eternal principles that constitute wholes as in Goethe's *Urpflanze*.

### 3. EXPLANATION

We have shown that we must conceive Nature in both mechanistic and organic terms to attain that kind of knowledge which liberates. Adequate knowledge of a thing includes a reference to the order of causes in Nature. We can know things as they are in their relations to each other. In so far as a man recognises this context adequately, he puts his mind within the intellectual order and knows himself and

things as eternal beings flowing from the divine essence. As a result, an essential part of the content of the curriculum will be to know the correct form for explaining phenomena, including oneself. One will teach this explanation in addition to the content already described: "...our ultimate end requires... that the thing be conceived either through its essence alone or through its proximate cause. If the thing is in itself, or, as is commonly said, is the cause of itself, then it must be understood through its essence alone; but if it is not in itself, but requires a cause to exist, then it must be understood through its proximate cause"(TdIEs92). According to Spinoza, the essence of a finite thing is co-determined by its place in the structure of the infinite intellect as a whole. That is co-determined by the essences of other finites things: "...It is clear that our Mind, in so far as it understands, is an eternal mode of thinking, which is determined by another eternal mode of thinking, and this again by another, and so on, to infinity: so that together, they all constitute God's eternal and infinite intellect"(E5p40s). To describe and explain the entities of the world they must be referred to the structural wholes to which they belong. This is because they only exist and have the properties they have as inseparable features of a structured whole. "The idea of a singular thing which actually exists has God for a cause not insofar as he is infinite, but insofar as he is considered to be affected by another idea of a singular thing which actually exists; . . and so on, to infinity"(E2p9). In stating the definition of Nature we give an absolutely proximate cause (APC) Interna. This is a cause which directly produces its effects and is in the subject. So Nature as a whole has within it the cause of its properties. In explaining what modes are we must have the following two elements. Nature is an APC Externa in relation to essences and external because God is not in the same subject as his effects. The attributes expressed in the infinite modes are the genera of finites. In addition, besides the subject there must be an APC Interna which gives the essence of that particular finite thing.

### EXPLAINING ESSENCE

One must explain the essence of things; it is this rather than the explanation of the existence of things with which rightly a Spinozan education would be concerned. Seen through their essences *sub specie aeternitatis* finite things are just as eternal as their sustaining Substance. Their essence requires the essence of Substance in order to exist. It is a logical timeless relation by which the modes presuppose Nature. One could explain the nature of a particular figure such as a circle by stating its proximate cause, i.e. essence, which makes it what it is and which accounts for other features constitutive of it. This is to grasp it as a whole. In addition, one can understand a circle as a property of geometrical space generated from extension. One is seeing it as a mode derivable from other properties of the system. This point can be put in a more formal way. A finite thing is a mode of substance. This mode has an essence which is a modification of the essence of substance. Two requirements are needed to define a finite thing: (1) the necessary and sufficient conditions of all non accidental properties of the thing, which conditions are its essence; (2) the subject of the mode, i. e. attributes. The adequate idea of a mode must explain it through active extension, and through those features which are necessary and universal to that attribute. A true idea "...shows how and why something is or has been done...This is the same as what the ancients said,...that true knowledge proceeds from cause to

effect..." (TdIEs85). A geometrical figure is a whole. The equidistance from the centre of all points on the circumference determines all the properties of the circle, e. g. the relation of the radius to the circumference. Apart from the primary principle of structure its properties are absent. All geometrical figures should be defined by the causes which generate them: the essence of a line by a moving point; the essence of a plane by a moving line; the essence of a body by a moving plane; the essence of a circle by a line of which one end is fixed and the other movable; the essence of a sphere by a semicircle revolving around its centre; the essence of the plane of an ellipse by a point adhering to a chord moving around two centres (TdIEs108, 96, 72). Explaining the essence of Nature via the attributes is only a necessary condition for the generation of the essence of finite things. Additional conditions are required. The immediate infinite modes supply the additional conditions which determine the essence of singular modes. The mediate infinite modes contain the actual essences of all singular modes in Nature.

### EXPLAINING FINITE EXISTENCE

To understand finite things changing and coming in and out of existence, we must see them in relation to other finite things and to the attributes and infinite modes. Given that a complete explanation of the existence of things is not possible, the aim of a Spinozan education would be to enable pupils to achieve an acceptable explanation of particular events. What counts as an acceptable explanation would vary with the subject matter to be explained and would have to be related to the abilities of the person concerned. One must refer to the essence of a thing as this plays a part in explaining its responses, e. g. the essence of water will explain why it responds in certain ways to stimuli. One must refer to other finite things: "All the modes by which a body is affected by another body follow both from the nature of the body affected and at the same time the affecting body, so that one and the same body may be moved differently according to differences in the bodies moving it. And conversely, different bodies may be moved differently by one and the same body " (E2L3A1); "Every singular thing...can neither exist nor be determined to produce an effect unless it is determined to exist and produce an effect by another cause. ...and so on to infinity" (E1p28). Thirdly one must show how the existence of a thing is shaped by the whole of which it is a part. Spinoza gives the example of a worm living in the bloodstream whose sight is keen enough to distinguish the particles of blood and lymph and to observe how each part on collision with another either rebounds or communicates a part of its own motion. That worm would live in this blood as we live in this part of the universe and he would consider each particle of blood to be a whole and not a part. The worm could not know how all the parts are controlled by the universal nature of blood and are forced as the universal nature of blood demands to adapt themselves to one another so as to harmonise with one another in a certain way (Ep. XXXII).

Every thing is understood in terms of two intersecting lines of explanation (Curley 1969, p. 66): one, a set of general laws; two, a set of antecedent conditions. To explain thunder we must appeal to laws, but laws of themselves can't generate particular things. We need to understand these laws in their order of dependence on others. Natural laws are real powers, the actual causes of the things falling under

them, determining how b affects c. So we distinguish what causes a law to exist and what causes a particular thing to exist under that law. The law is generated in Nature by immanent logical derivation. The particular thing is produced under that law by other particular things, transmitting external causality in endless chains. When a clap of thunder occurs it is determined vertically by a system of mechanical laws anchored in the infinite mode of motion and rest, and spelled out in more specific laws of meteorology.

## **4. METHOD**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this section I shall predominantly follow the TdIE. "...after we know what knowledge is necessary for us, we must teach the Way and Method by which we may achieve this kind of Knowledge of the things that are to be known"(TdIEs29). If we are to attain the chief good we must devise a cure for the intellect. Spinoza's method is directed to enabling one to grasp essential features of Nature. Learning this method will make one freer, as we can use it to help us form ideas for ourselves without relying on others. Employing this method is an essential element in attaining freedom: "...whether there is or can be such a Method that by means of it we can proceed safely and without weariness in the consideration of the most exalted subjects? or whether like our bodies, our minds also are subject to accidents, and our thoughts are governed more by chance...These questions I think I shall satisfy if I show there must necessarily be a Method by which we can direct and concatenate our clear and distinct conceptions, and the understanding is not, like the body, subject to accidents"(Ep. XXXVII); "...all the clear and distinct conceptions which we form can only arise from other clear and distinct conceptions which are in us; they acknowledge no other cause outside us. Whence it follows that whatever clear and distinct conceptions we form depend only on our nature...on our absolute power and not on chance..."(Ibid).

### **CONCEPT OF METHOD**

According to Spinoza "...the Method must speak about Reasoning, or about the intellection; i. e. Method is not the reasoning itself by which we understand the causes of things...it is understanding what a true idea is by distinguishing it from the rest of the perceptions; by investigating its nature, so that from that we may come to know our power of understanding and so restrain the mind that it understands, according to that standard, everything that is to be understood; and finally by teaching and constructing certain rules as aids, so that the mind does not weary itself in useless things. "(TdIEs37). To study the method of reasoning is not to know the causes of things, it is to know what a true idea is. He says the method consists only "...in the knowledge of the pure understanding"(Ep. XXXVII).

In studying method we are not, say, discovering the nature of diamonds, we are studying what makes any true idea true. When we come to discovering the causes of things, e.g. the essence of copper, we will then have in mind the general criteria for

that idea to be true. We will still have to determine the actual essence of copper. A problem is, if our reflexive ideas are reflections of first order ideas how can our ideas be changed? The reply to this charge is that a method does not rearrange the true ideas on which one reflects. It does abstract from the true ideas certain features which they have in common and which can be established as rules. In theory Spinoza's method can be dispensed with, for just as the first truth can be discovered without a method so can the others. But he says that what we can't acquire by luck we can acquire by a deliberate plan (TdIEs44). The point is that pupils may have some capacity to form ideas but this can be developed further through a systematic method.

How are we to distinguish good from bad beliefs? This implies a criterion of truth. It is not a good method to accept a proposition only because one is told. But if we look at the good beliefs to get the criterion this will presuppose that we know how to distinguish them. We can't start to find the criterion from beliefs as this presupposes we have it. If we start with a good method and then sort out our ideas how do we know the method is good? If we need another method to assess the method how do we know this method is correct? The solution is that Spinoza knows certain things and works to a general criterion of truth by which he can extend his knowledge. The method begins with knowledge of one or two true ideas and reflects on them to provide procedural rules (Garrett 1986, p. 63).

#### THE PARTS OF THE METHOD

"...the Method must, first show how to distinguish a true idea from all other perceptions, and to restrain the mind from those other perceptions; second teach rules so that we may perceive things unknown according to such a standard; third establish an order, so that we do not become weary with trifles. When we came to know this Method, we saw, fourth, that it will be most perfect when we have the idea of the most perfect Being" (TdIEs49). The second part of the method is relevant as it is supposed to give rules of procedure. But Spinoza does not provide an account of them. The third and fourth parts are related to the geometric method which I will discuss below.

Spinoza cites two goals for the first part of method: (1) how to distinguish a true idea from all other perceptions; (2) to show how to restrain the mind from those other perceptions. He states: "Let us begin, therefore with the first part of the Method, which is...to distinguish and separate true ideas from all other perceptions, and to restrain the mind from confusing false, fictitious, and doubtful ideas from true ones." (TdIEs50). As regards the first of these goals, we need to consider whether its pursuit can constitute part of the method. Spinoza says that investigating Nature "...requires a considerable capacity for making distinctions and much effort" (TdIEs45). On the other hand he says that he who has a true idea can't doubt this (E2p43). This would imply that a method is not needed. But there is a difference between knowing that a particular idea is true and distinguishing correctly a whole class of true ideas from the class of untrue. This requires a method. That truth requires no sign does not mean we require no labour to isolate it. "...I warn the reader that I shall not discuss the essence of each perception...that pertains to

Philosophy, but shall discuss only what the Method demands, i. e. , what false, fictitious and doubtful ideas are concerned with, and how we shall be freed from each of them "(TdIEs51).

I shall now consider the second goal of the first part of Spinoza's method. It may be important to teach the ideas of the imagination, e. g. poorly supported theories, so that people can appreciate the force of good ones (Garrett, 1986, p. 75). The ability to distinguish true ideas is no guarantee that one will not slide back into imagination, any more than grasping the difference between waking and sleeping is a guarantee against falling asleep. So we need to look at remedies against the imagination. We must accustom people to their own internal meditations; distinguishing fiction and falsity might be useful practice(TdIEs45). Pupils can be given examples of fallacious reasoning; this will give them experience which will be helpful in attaining correct reasoning (Ch5, p. 129).

The second part of the method is concerned with the means of realising this end of distinguishing true from false ideas. Spinoza states: "...the chief point of this second part of the Method is concerned with...knowing the conditions of a good definition and then, the way of finding good definitions"(TdIEs94). The general conditions will tell us what a correct definition will look like **and** the rules will help us find the definitions in particular cases, e. g. to discover the actual essence of, say, light. Knowing these rules is not of course equivalent to finding the actual causes of things but will serve as checks on what we discover. I suppose the rules of logic could enable us to check the validity of a certain proof. Subsequently Spinoza states: "But so far we have had no rules for discovering definitions" (TdIEs107). I will defer consideration of this second feature of the second part of method until later (Ch3, p. 79). I will turn to the first feature. Spinoza is stating what a good definition should look like (TdIEs92-98). We will know in very general terms whether the definition we form is true as it must conform to certain standards. If it does not conform to them it can't be a true idea.

In the case of finite things a good definition will give its essence which must suffice to deduce all its other necessary properties: "Therefore, so long as we are dealing with the investigation of things, we must never infer anything from abstractions, and we shall take very great care not to mix up the things that are only in the intellect with those that are real. But the best conclusion will have to be drawn from some particular affirmative essence, or, from a true and legitimate definition. For from universal axioms alone the intellect cannot descend to singulars..."(TdIEs93).

We must guard against a false genetic explanation of a thing, which results from failing to investigate its proper nature carefully. In forming this kind of explanation one does not just give the defining feature of a thing, one shows how these follow from its most fundamental feature. Spinoza considers that a perfect definition of a circle would derive all its characteristic properties from its fundamental one: "...it is the figure that is described by a line of which one end is fixed and the other movable" (TdIEs96). If we define a circle as "...a figure in which the lines drawn from the centre to the circumference are equal, no one fails to see that such a definition does not at all explain the essence of the circle, but only a property of it" (TdIEs95). Spinoza goes on to say that the definition of an uncreated thing should



enable all its properties to be inferred from its definition. These properties are called *propria*: "They are nothing but adjectives which cannot be understood without their Substantives, i. e., without them God would indeed not be God but still He is not God through them" (ST 1, III). This point is also made by Mill: "Proprium...signifies an attribute which is not indeed part of the essence, but which flows from or is a consequence of the essence and is therefore inseparably attached to the species, e. g., the various properties of a triangle which though no part of its definition must necessarily be possessed by whatever comes under that definition. (1965, Bk1Ch7)".

I will now look at the third part of the method. The concept of the proper order is the rationalist view of long chains of reasoning. Knowledge is regarded as one system: "...it is evident that for our mind to reproduce completely the likeness of Nature, it must bring all of its ideas forth from that idea which represents the source and origin of the whole of nature, so that idea is also the source of the other ideas"(TdIEs42). For any argument one may start in two ways: start from the axioms and work down or start from a complex idea and ask how it can be proved. The former is the geometric and the latter the analytic method. The geometric method can be outlined as follows: the method uses basic concepts that are defined or principles requiring no proof; conclusions are drawn from these beginnings always step by step, making explicit the relation of each conclusion to what has gone before. We must still discover these true ideas. Nature consists of a tightly knit system of causes so the description of Nature must consist of propositions which follow from each other with logical rigour. We understand the effect through knowledge of its cause.

I will illustrate the synthetic method as follows (B. A. Brody, pp. 138-151): the deduction is not just a formal one; so whilst we can deduce the height of a flagpole from the length of the shadow cast from it and the position of the sun in the sky, we can also deduce the length of the shadow cast from the height of the flagpole and position of sun in sky. The latter follows the direction of explanation, as it is the sun striking at a given angle the flagpole of the given height that causes the shadow to have the length it has. But the sun striking the flagpole when its shadow has the length it has is not the cause of the height of the flagpole. So  $x$  explains  $y$  if  $y$  can be deduced from  $x$ . Also the explanans must be a cause. Now this illustrates the different perspective of a Spinozan education from our own. We might be more concerned to work out the height of a building for insurance purposes, and so the first deduction might be more useful. For Spinoza we must follow the order of Nature from cause to effect. Another example from the Ethics is as follows: we have a maxim that hatred is to be conquered by love or generosity, not by reciprocal hatred (E5p10s). This is a consequence of the theorem in E4p46. This is derived from the universal proposition that hatred can never be good (E4p45). So the maxim becomes certain knowledge. The geometric method helps in teaching truth because its successive inferences, when valid, compel our assent. It advances from premises which are taken as evident to conclusions which follow from them. This is what would have to be taught in a Spinozan education for those capable of understanding this.

The fourth part alluded to above refers to the fact that the invention of this order presupposes knowledge of God, presumably the attributes and modes. We go from

one real being to another deducing ideas from another starting from the idea of the essence of Nature. An additional reason for the axiomatic method is not to discover new facts but to present conclusions which follow from general principles.

R. Kennington (1980a, pp. 295-296) thinks that the synthetic method depends on the analytic ones, since the principles used by the synthetic method would be being found by analysis. Spinoza is not entirely consistent in his views. In the Preface to Descartes the analytic method is described as the true one. In the Theologico-Political Treatise the four principal methodological passages never mention geometric method: (1) In the first we are required to deduce and infer the unknown from the known in so far as it is known (TPT VII, 113). (2) One composes a history of nature and deduces definitions of natural things (TPT VII, 99). The other two references can also be found there (p. 104 p. 185). Now we can't deduce geometrically the existence of finite modes. Because the geometric method begins with the definitions of infinite being it is not competent to account for finite things. Analysis begins from the sensible, seeks the causes or principles of the sensible understood as effects, and culminates in elementary first principles. Analysis is the true way of discovery: "...the method of interpreting Scripture does not widely differ from the method of interpreting nature...the interpretation of nature consists in the examination of the history of nature, and therefrom deducing definitions of natural phenomena on certain fixed axioms..."(TPT XVII, 99).

Despite this Spinoza considers his approach to be superior to that of Descartes, and in the Ethics we see the application of the **synthetic** method. We can illustrate this method as follows. We start with extension as energy. Then from the laws of motion we can construe how light behaves. Light is a tendency towards movement which follows the same laws as does movement. We can construe the situation in which a ray of light strikes a smooth flat surface as analogous to that in which a body travelling at a constant velocity strikes a flat hard surface. We know how a body would behave. Knowing this and assuming light to be a tendency towards movement we understand the laws of optics. So vision is understood as an exchange of particles. From this and the laws of motion we can deduce the law of reflection, e. g. only 8% of light falling perpendicularly on a sheet of glass is reflected but at larger angles of incidence almost all the light is reflected. This explains why when the sun is low it is dazzling to look at in a lake. From the laws of motion we can deduce laws of refraction and properties of vision such as a spoon seeming bent when it passes through the surface of water. I agree with G. Deleuze (1990, pp. 156-161) that the true method is synthetic. We could start from a clear knowledge of an effect but will know nothing of the cause beyond what we consider in its effects: "...true knowledge proceeds from cause to effect..."(TdIEs85); "...knowledge of the effect is nothing but acquiring a more perfect knowledge of its cause"(TdIEs92). Djin (1986b p. 72) correctly thinks this movement can only succeed if we form definitions of less universal things within the framework of the universal principles of Nature. The upward movement must be inserted in a downward movement. Synthetic deduction mediated by input from experience: "As in the examination of natural phenomena we first try to investigate what is most universal and common to all nature - such for instance, as motion and rest, and their rules, which nature always observes, and through which she continually works - and then we proceed to what is less universal"(TPT VII, 104). This last process of the less universal can be compared to

the method of Goethe: "In order to describe it (the archetypal phenomena) the intellect fixes the empirically variable, excludes the accidental, separates the impure, unravels the tangled, and even discovers the unknown" (A.G. Zajonc 1987, p. 232). To learn the synthetic method will require practice at deduction and the discovery of some rules.

### RULES

Spinoza intended to formulate rules in the second part of the method to guide us in our search for the causes of things; but he did not stipulate what these rules were. I will first make some general comments on the idea of rules. One will have a set of rules which will tell us how rational agreement can be reached and what would settle the issue where statements seem to conflict. Spinoza thought that a belief is rational if it conforms to criteria and the same criteria are applicable in every context. When we proceed from a starting point to a conclusion in accordance with rules we free ourselves from error. Some rules are methodological, e.g. hypothetico-deductive, some substantive, e.g. laws of motion. Some principles are applicable in every domain, some only within a limited domain. Formal logic is an example of the former. T. S. Kuhn says that a paradigm provides a set of rules that supplement the rules of formal logic and are inviolable for the normal scientist, but may be rejected when the paradigm breaks down. This contrasts with Spinoza's view, that a timeless set of rules could be found. According to K. Popper (1972, Ch1), a scientific claim is amenable to testing and possible falsification. Popper seeks a set of rules that will govern rational decision making. Modus tollens provides us with an algorithm for deciding when to accept that an hypothesis has failed. The contrast with Spinoza is that Popper does not think the rules will be eternal. Contrary to what Spinoza thought it is not self evident what the correct rules of logic are. It was long held that sentences of the form 'some F's are G' are validly deducible from 'all F's are G', but we can't infer sentences of the form 'p and q' from 'if p then q'.

It is not possible to reduce all decisions to the application of algorithms. Computer programming does not always involve using rules. Reasons for preferring some option can be given; even though they cannot be reduced to the description of a set of premises and an algorithm. On the other hand it is part of the concept of reason that what is given as a reason applies in similar situations and from this the notion of procedures derives. The free person will have a set of procedures which transcends his particular situation and which can be used to assess ideas. So, within Spinoza's system a person exercising judgement without appeal to rules is less free than one following the correct rules, as at the core of the idea of a rule-controlled proof is the elimination of the hazards of personal assessment. It may be said that Spinoza's approach shifts responsibility from the judgement of the person to the rules. According to R. W. Newell (1986, p. 30), one can't ultimately appeal to rules; a person is prepared to allow rules of inference to determine judgements because he has chosen that procedure. Spinoza would disagree; he would say that in the case of ultimate rules no decision is made to accept them; as their self-completeness guarantees their truth.

I will now turn to what the rules might be to enable us to form true ideas. The requirement for a good definition suggests a procedure for discovering good definitions. If we are searching for a definition we might proceed by enumerating the known properties and looking for the causal formula which would suffice for deducing the properties. This is what Spinoza does at the end of the TdIE when searching for a definition of the intellect: "...if we attend to the properties of the intellect that we understand clearly and distinctly, its definition will become known through itself" (TdIEs107). He then enumerates eight properties of the intellect concluding that: "...we must now establish something common from which these properties necessarily follow, or such that when it is given, they are necessarily given" (TdIEs110). The idea of a correct order will suggest some rules for discovering truths that must conform to this order if they are to be true. There are some truths we can be certain of, i. e. first principles like definitions, postulates and axioms. Definitions are clear explanations of terms. Postulates and axioms are propositions so clear and evident that no one can deny them. These are common notions. Many of the propositions Spinoza counts as axioms are ones he would regard as self-evident, e.g. the seven axioms at the start of Ethics Part 1. A1 says that whatever is, is either in itself or in another. This amounts to the claim that everything has a cause. A3 states that if the cause exists the effect must follow.

It is Spinoza's view that logic is essential to truth and would not be reached without it. The teaching of logic would form part of the teaching of a correct method (Ch5, p. 129). Mathematical science and its most perfect form Geometry would provide the rules. In Part 1 of the Ethics Spinoza proves the third proposition with the help of *modus ponendo ponens*:  $pq \ p \text{ therefore } q$ . In the demonstration of the fifth proposition, another rule of deduction, the *reductio ad absurdum* is used. We suppose something and prove that it leads to contradiction. From this we conclude the opposite of the hypothesis. Another rule is *modus tollendo ponens*. We state two possibilities,  $p \text{ or } q$ . Then we demonstrate that one of them is not possible so we conclude to the other. The rule is used in proposition eight as Spinoza states that every substance is infinite or finite. It cannot be finite so it must be infinite.

### EMPIRICAL METHODS

I will now consider the role of empirical methods in a Spinozan education. This will enable us to see what empirical studies will be pursued and what they are used for. Spinoza places emphasis on the right method of conducting scientific inquiry. He would have supported Bacon's statement that: "...an entirely different method, order and process of continuing and advancing experience must also be introduced" (1960 Bk1. p. 96). It may appear that empirical methods are not part of Spinoza's methodology. Spinoza's message in his letters to Boyle is that experiments decide no unique hypothesis. Spinoza says: "I pass on to the experiments which I adduced to confirm my explanation, not absolutely, but...to a certain extent (Ep. XIII)". A mechanical hypothesis about sizes and shapes may be justified only by mathematical proof from higher principles. Boyle had tried to prove conclusively the mechanistic doctrine that heat, colour, etc., are the result of bodies in motion. Boyle's experiments don't prove the corpuscular explanation of secondary qualities. Spinoza's propositions are not made at random but are the implications derived

from substance. The deduction does not need empirical testing. What matters is whether the implications of an idea are coherent. Spinoza's criticism of experience has led some commentators (Parkinson 1964, pp. 157-162) to ascribe wrongly to Spinoza a low interest in beliefs based on experience. In fact in Spinoza's system experience is given a number of assignments. It informs us of the existence of contingent things. Experience is the only possible way to get some knowledge about the existence of modes. It is used to support conclusions. The refutation of mind/body interaction will not carry conviction unless proved by experience (E3p2s). Moreover an exact description of one's experience is prerequisite to investigation of the essence of finite things. In the Ethics E2a4 and E2a5 are generalisations from experience. Spinoza would think that these are so obvious that no person could deny them. But this is not because of the meaning of terms but because they are confirmed by experience. Now what of the axioms that come after 2p13s? That all bodies are either in motion or rest is a self evident truth. But that each body moves now more slowly now more quickly is not. From the concept of a body one can't derive the concept of a variation in the speed of the body. A priori there can be no reason for bodies not to have uniform speed throughout eternity. The six postulates before p14 E2 and postulate 2 at beginning of E3, all deal with the nature of the human body. Surely that the human body needs nourishment to survive is something we learn from experience. Not every truth can be self-evident. He says (TdIEs103) experiments are needed to gain knowledge of particular things. So in a Spinozan education some work on observation and experiment will be employed. But the important point is that this will be to assist in discovering the essence of things - light, vision, magnets, etc. (Ch2, p. 51, Ch3, p. 72). We can refer back to Bockemühl to understand the relation between understanding essences and empirical work (Ch3, p. 68). A wide variety of plants and leaves will be examined to discern the inner principles of each.

Spinoza's view on the role of observation and deduction is as follows: "I...did not bring forward these experiments completely to confirm by them the things which I had asserted, but only because those experiments, which I had asserted and shown to be consistent with reason, seemed to confirm them to a certain extent" (Ep. XIII). Spinoza would agree with Galileo that in the case of a conflict between the two the guidance of reason is to be preferred above experience. A theory becomes stronger to the degree to which it can become integrated in the totality of our beliefs. The best guarantee of truth is offered by formal systems of reasoning. Experiments can't prove the structure of reality. This is done by reasoning. As there are so many causes experience can't prove the cause. Harris (1970, pp. 93-102) illustrates this process of deduction: Galileo in the course of the third dialogue enunciates a number of laws. There is no attempt to describe any experiments which confirm them. The proof that the spaces described by a body falling from rest with a uniform accelerated motion are to each other as the squares of the time-intervals employed in traversing these distances is derived from an earlier theorem. Galileo is developing a deductive system, to develop from first principles a dynamic theory that would account for the earth's motion compatible with that of falling bodies on the earth. The senses provide the phenomena to be explained. From observation we get the material of science which demands explanation by determining mathematical relations between phenomena. There must be a co-operation between the experimentally gathered data and their interpretation in the light of universal principles.

An hypothesis as to the essence of a particular kind of phenomenon, e. g. light, must be consistent with the fundamental principles. This would not be sufficient for its truth as many hypotheses could be consistent in this way. It is at this point that observation will play a part. If deductions are confirmed by observations then there are grounds for accepting them. There are a number of problems. The observation statements could be false. In its early years Newton's gravitational theory was falsified by observation of the moon's orbit. It was not until later that this observation was proved false. A theory comprises a complex set of statements and an observation may just disconfirm one of these and it may not be clear which. The use of crucial experiments could help decide which theory is correct if both imply the same observational consequences. A further consideration is the ability of a theory to explain a wide range of phenomena. That a theory is consistent with a wide range of phenomena is not sufficient ground for its truth, as one may have overlooked a theory which could be equally consistent. It is at this point that the argument from enumeration is relevant. This involves a complete enumeration of all possible explanations and one would eliminate all but one through crucial experiments. To explain, say, the essence of sulphur, we would begin with general principles—metaphysics, laws of motion. We would observe the behaviour of sulphur. We then enumerate all the possible causes which give its essence, i. e. particular ratios of motion and rest (Ch3, p. 63), then we perform a crucial experiment until all but one has been eliminated. Alternatively we would do a much wider range of experiments and deduce which possible proximate cause, i. e. essence of sulphur, satisfies both the empirical phenomena, its behaviour in varying contexts, and first principles. This is how we must be taught to proceed in a Spinozan education.

## **CHAPTER 4 - THE AFFECTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

We become free through knowing ourselves and Nature. To understand oneself the nature of the mind must be known, and this can only be understood in its dependence on Nature, from which its essence and manner of existing derives. I discuss this in Section one. In S2 I show what it is to lack absolute and relative freedom vis a vis the affects. I then show what absolute freedom in the affects would involve (S3, S4). Relative freedom involves attaining ends consonant with one's nature as a human being and regulating one's transactions with others in terms of fundamental principles (S5). In S6 I consider what is involved in attaining a more impersonal view in one's moral life. In S7 and S8 I detail the personal qualities of the free person. In S8 I show that we can become freer if we use methods to control our affective life.

It may be said that a Spinozan education has no relevance to many who have not the intelligence to implement what follows in this chapter. This would not be a correct view as to attain even some self-control (Ch4, p.100) represents some advance in freedom. The thrust of this thesis is that educators must enable people to become as free as they can.

### **1. SELF-KNOWLEDGE**

It is central to a Spinozan education that people attain self-knowledge. People may know the theories of Einstein but be hopelessly out of relation to other people, responding in the wrong way and being emotionally unstable. They lack knowledge as they have not related their nature to Nature as a whole (Saw 1972, p. 152). Pupils must form a conception which transcends culture. We can see what this involves with regard to cognition and one's physical nature. One will understand one's perceptions in terms of exchanges in energy between the motions in the eyes and nerves in interaction with the environment. These interactions are subject to the fundamental laws of motion described by the infinite modes. Different colours are the result of the reaction of our nerves and brain to wave frequencies. As the light received varies, from the smallest to the largest frequency, our sensation of colour changes from red to violet. Our states would not be what they are if the attributes and infinite modes were other, and since they can't be other we can understand how our perceptions must be as they are. I see myself as a natural object interacting with others, and can understand this in terms of concepts that are detached from any perspective (Ch3, p. 64). I can only grasp my being as a constellation of motion and rest through the attributes and infinite modes of Nature. It is because they are constituted by motion and rest that I am so constituted. What I see, and the character of what I see, is determined by these wider forces of which my being is a part. This is to understand one's nature in mechanistic terms.

We must also know ourselves in organic terms. To say that the heart is part of the body is to say it bears the imprint of the body. The essence of the whole constitutes the nature of the parts. Every part of a given human body possesses the nature of the

whole in common with other parts. A principle form must be presupposed that runs through all beings and realises itself in different ways: from stone to crystal, to metals, to plants, to animals, to humans. The particular behaviour of humans can be seen to be governed by a set of laws that apply only to them. More general aspects of their behaviour can be seen to be governed by general laws that apply to mammals; still more general aspects by more general laws that apply to all organisms. The most general aspects of their behaviour must be governed by laws that apply to Nature as a whole. R. Dawkins (1986, p. 270) shows how "All animals and plants and bacteria, however different they appear to be from one another, are astonishingly uniform when we get down to molecular basics". Spinoza would say that our essence bears the imprint of Nature as a whole, conceived as the face of the universe. To understand our essence we need to understand how it has been shaped by that of other finite things (Dawkins 1986, suggests we have a common ancestor with the dog and another with the rat p. 275), and, by the face of the universe. The more adequate ideas we form of Nature, the more we can see how our inner principle is determined by others; and that just as the being of the rose embodies the being of the plant, so our being is embodied in the essence of other finite things and in Nature as a whole. I am one with the universe in that I am structurally and substantively shaped by it. Its selfhood conditions mine and vice versa. When we recognise the involvement of wider wholes in our identity an expansion in the scope of self-love occurs. This leads to a loving attitude to the world (Ch4, p. 103).

Spinoza's view is that self-knowledge must pass through knowledge of the world (Yovel 1989a, pp. 164-166). I do not understand myself in direct awareness, or by concentration on my personal history. I have to locate my own particular place and mode of activity within Nature. A self-centred standpoint, determining a limited point of view, is to be succeeded by an attempt to understand one's states from a more objective standpoint. This presupposes the second kind of knowledge, in which I engage in a diversified scientific study of physics, physiology, psychology and sociology. We must embark on a program of study aimed at knowing ourselves as creatures of Nature: the hidden causes of my fears and my sufferings and ambitions; the powers that make me waver between fear and hope; how the body is related to the mind; how affects arise and how my body is determined by the environment. At this point, having acquired a scientific knowledge of myself, I perform an intuitive leap which allows me to take a synoptic view of my singular essence as it inheres in Nature (Ch3, p. 59). I agree with Yovel (1989, p. 164) that this contrasts with a Freudian approach. In Freud, self-knowledge is not salvation but therapy. It is not mediated by much metaphysics and general science. A person need not go very far beyond himself to attain a knowledge of laws of Nature, so as to attain liberation. This approach is inconsistent with our current approach, in which pupils are expected to discover what they really want, where these wants are shaped by the society in which they have been socialised.

### THE AFFECTS

For Spinoza the fundamental concepts for explaining the affects are the conatus, pleasure and pain. The starting point is the conatus (Ch1, p. 10). The striving to persevere in being and the consciousness of this is desire. In relation to mind it is



will. In relation to the body it is appetite. Desire is conscious appetite. Pleasure is a modification which increases or decreases this power (E3DefAff). Pain is a reduction in this power. Desire as affect refers to particular desires. If *x* impedes one's general desire to enhance one's being, one will experience pain and will have a desire to be rid of *x*. Desire also involves an affirmation that the object is good or bad. It is because *x* gives one pleasure that one desires it (E4p15Dem). The derivative emotions are combinations of pleasure, pain and desire directed to objects. We are natural objects, as others in nature, and we will consciously respond to whatever affects our central drive. The continuity with other finite beings is that this tendency in us is not totally dissimilar to plants, for example, that turn to the light. Spinoza says that a necessary component of an emotion is that it has an object (E2Ax3). It must be about something. In the case of objectless emotions the object may not be present, as with moods which do not have identifiable targets and which would be part of Spinoza's account of pleasure and pain. Emotions are constituted by beliefs (R. S. Peters 1974, pp. 174-175). Emotions can be justified or unjustified and this means that they must involve thoughts. This could not be the case if they just involved sensations, as is the case with a headache. Reference to a thought is necessary if one is to distinguish one emotion from another (DefAff).

A further feature of the affects is that an emotion involves evaluation. One experiences a situation as good or bad. Shame involves a belief that others have blamed one's acts and one regards this as bad. To understand a person's emotions we need to know what he thinks is good or bad. I experience something as bad, i. e. suffer a diminution of well being because I think about a situation. So a person feels bad because someone is successful or because of some act that others blame. What emotion one is experiencing depends on the belief which is responsible for one's change in well being, e.g. a person feels envious if he experiences a decrease in well-being on hearing about the success of another (E3DefAffXXIII). There are ranges within particular emotions, from highly directed and thought dependent to objectless. The ascription of a certain state of mind to oneself depends on the existence in the subject of certain intellectual capacities. This includes the discrimination of cognitive levels and having concepts.

These are the basic features of the affects. We now need to link these features within Spinoza's theory of the conatus. What underlies the particular emotions and desires is a more basic opinion of the subject about what is good for him. We are attached to money. We perceive that some investment is uncertain and as a result we feel pain but only because of the attachment. To understand the emotion we must grasp the attachment. The intensity of the attachment will determine the intensity of the emotion. If we love *A* intensely we may feel very jealous if *A* becomes attached to some one else. We are moved by the onset of this to desire to remove the obstacle and restore what we love to its previous satisfactory state. In the absence of this attachment we will not experience an emotional response. Our particular nature is constituted by the abiding concerns which our life embodies. Each act must be seen as an attempt to fortify the individual's perception of personal adequacy. A person may see himself as demanding respect; if he does not receive this he will behave in ways to get it. Once the phenomenal self has been established experience can only be interpreted in terms of it. According to P. Lecky (1951), the personality is an organisation of values. Any value entering the system which is inconsistent with

the individual's valuation of himself and can't be assimilated will be rejected. This resistance is essential for the maintenance of the self. Mechanistic theories assume that activity is only the effect of some antecedent cause. The usual formulation is that the organism acts because it is stimulated. Lecky (1951, p. 151) says that every organism is continuously active. We do not have to explain why an organism acts but only why it acts in one way rather than another; as the tendency to maintain a self-consistent organisation is a fundamental characteristic of human nature. This would be Spinoza's view as well. This account of the affects is a particular illustration of the conatus which applies to all things. The continuity with other finite things is that we must see emotional responses in terms of the drive to maintain an equilibrium, defined, in this case, by one's central interest. What frustrates one's desire to maintain one's being will meet with a response to overcome it. The rise of temper against an insult is essentially no different from responses by organisms to avert threats to them. We must see people as part of a social system. These systems are governed by a drive towards balance in the exchange of values. If A bestows a negative value on B and brings their relation out of balance, then this balance could be restored; but if they are governed by the laws of association then B will reciprocate, and a further imbalance will occur leading A to respond further. If the interaction is governed by reason then B will respond with love (E4p46). A weaker form of response will be for B to be loyal to the legal institutions rather than take revenge. Spinoza would see human societies as systems of forces interacting with each other in accordance with necessary laws.

I have shown the framework that we need to attain self-knowledge and knowledge of other people. This framework enables one to become free in absolute terms and the more we apply it to the common order the more free we become in relative terms. I will deepen this account by detailing how the passive affects arise. This will also show what it means to be unfree with regard to the affects.

## **2. UNFREE AFFECTS**

"For not only is the ignorant man troubled in many ways by external causes, and unable ever to possess true peace of mind, but he also lives as if he knew neither himself, nor God, nor things; and as soon as he ceases to be acted on he ceases to be." (Ep5p42s). This shows that in their affective lives people are so tied to the common order that if they ceased to be a function of it there would be nothing left to them. One is reminded here of consumers for whom life outside this activity does not exist. Deprive them of this function and you strip away their identity. For Spinoza the ideal of self-sufficiency is the standard against which all goods must be measured. Wealth and success turn out not to be good things because the desire for them is incompatible with self-sufficiency. A person who seeks finite things will be in a vulnerable state as they can be removed from him. One's love of pets, money, etc., makes one vulnerable to changes in these objects. Each of the excellences requires external resources: generosity involves giving to others who must be there to receive; moderation involves the appropriate relation to objects, such as food and drink, which can fail to be present. In addition "There are a great many examples of people

who have suffered persecution to the death on account of their wealth, or have exposed themselves to so many dangers to acquire wealth..."(TdIEs8).

A person's well-being could be affected by particular occurrences, e. g. he could be saddened by someone's death. This constitutes lack of freedom as his well being is not in his control and he is subject to the influence of spatio-temporal events. One reason for this emotional disturbance is one's concern for finite objects. If the person is very concerned about these particular things he will be even more likely to experience a decline in his well-being: "...These evils seemed to have arisen from the fact that all happiness or unhappiness was placed in the quality of the object to which we cling with love. For strife will never arise on account of what is not loved, nor will there be sadness if it perishes, nor envy if it is possessed by another, nor fear, nor hatred - in a word, no disturbances of the mind "(TdIEs9). But as M. Slote (1983. p.134), rightly, points out if one seeks to avoid being subject to love one will be acting against one's nature qua human being. Love and friendship may be good for us even if not goods sub specie aeternitatis. Given the conatus as the urge to preserve one's being Spinoza may agree with this, and thus is inconsistent. I think this is because of the tension between absolute and relative freedom. The former requires a degree of transcendence which is purchased at too high a price, as the solitary life is insufficient for the good life. It lacks something that is part of being human. A life without love is radically lacking in essential human value. Also one can't love someone and not have some emotional dependence on them (Ch5, p. 138).

A problem is whether temporal ends are to have a place, given Spinoza's emphasis on eternal ends: "It is part of a wise man, I say, to refresh and restore himself in moderation with pleasant food and drink..."(E4p45s). But Spinoza says "So he who unites with corruptible things is always miserable. For they are outside his power and subject to many accidents"(ST 2, V). However, if we understand by 'unites' the excessive concern for these ends, then he will be saying that one can pursue them in moderation and will not be affected by their loss. This will also apply to material possessions where people can become too attached to these goods.

Another reason why one can become vulnerable to events arises from a belief in free-will. It is because one believes that x intentionally harmed one that one experiences a decrease in well being. Related to this are affects that depend on an ignorance of causes. Spinoza's view is that pity arises because we do not understand the causes of the person's states. The difference to the first type is that one need not believe anyone deliberately produced the pitiable state. The similarity is that the first type also depends on ignorance of causes. I will show that, by changing one's view of events and seeing them as determined, one can undercut the source of this unfreedom and be less subject to particular things.

We have described the unfree state of most people. They are obsessed with material possessions and are vulnerable to events that occur, partly because of this obsession, and partly because of their ignorance of the causes of things. As a result they change as the situation they are in changes. We can deepen our understanding of this state by looking at the laws that govern the affects of the unfree person.

### LAWS

Passive affects are those which tie us to our spatio-temporal circumstances. There are some distinct laws which make one so tied. Educators need to understand the operation of these laws if they are to overcome the passive affects. We also need to understand these laws if we are to understand ourselves as part of nature. The operation of laws deprives us of relative freedom, as the common order is in control of us.

The basic laws are:

- (1) We maintain pleasant images; which causes perversion of loves and hate, dwelling on merits, dreams of others' praise, magnifying the good qualities of friends and evil qualities of enemies.
- (2) Sympathy leads to us desiring that others feel as we do, and leads us to feel others' affects.
- (3) Laws of association make us link things that are unconnected.
- (4) Time favours what is present now.
- (5) A belief in freedom encourages reactive feelings.

In this section I show how we can study ourselves as natural objects. This involves understanding ourselves as a part of a system and determined by universal laws (Ch3, p. 49). The account is analogous to the laws of motion affecting physical beings. Bodies come together and apart through the laws of attraction and repulsion, and likewise the affects through the laws of association. In this respect we are no more free than atoms combining with others in accordance with laws and particular stimuli. If hydrogen is around then sulphur will combine with it. Likewise if x is around when y affects us then x will be connected to y. We can love x because x has been associated with y which we love, and then hate z because it has been associated with w. Thus an object previously neutral can now be hated. Objects that are accidentally near each other or similar in some aspect can become associated. A pupil can come to hate history because it has been taught by someone he dislikes. This hatred is not based on considerations connected with the subject. The affect gets automatically transferred from one object to the other. If I take pleasure in x, and if I imagine y to resemble x, then I will take pleasure in y. If x affects us with a certain emotion, and y a contrary one, and x is imagined to resemble y, then one will have fluctuating emotions vis a vis x. The laws will explain prejudice (E3p46). In E3p25 Spinoza says that the wish is father to the thought. From the doctrine that we try to do what will improve our health, he has inferred that we also try to imagine what will do so; and from this he infers that we try to have beliefs about ourselves which are pleasant to have. In this way a desire for promotion may bring about a belief that it is imminent. An important principle is the law of imitation: if we imagine a person or thing like us is affected by some emotion then we will tend to feel it; if it is someone we love then his feeling of joy or sorrow will be transferred to us. This law underlies many of our sentiments, e. g. pity. If it is someone we love then the feeling will be transferred to us in greater measure than if we had no feelings towards him. If it is someone we hate, and he is imagined to feel sorrow, we will feel joy (E3p27).

If someone else loves what I hate then I will suffer fluctuation of mind. This personal conflict in me will provoke conflict with others as I will endeavour to make them love what I love (E3p31Dem). Envy arises from the operation of this law. If I imagine someone else is enjoying what only one person can possess, the sight of his enjoyment will cause me to desire it; but his possession of it will present an obstacle and I will endeavour to take it from him (E3p32). Position in time will determine one's affects: my affect is stronger if I perceive its cause as present (E4p9); my affect is more intense if I think x lies in the near future rather than remote in time (E4p10).

### **3. LOVE OF GOD**

For Spinoza, it is not rational insight on its own which is enough for freedom. We need to have affects which rise above the common order. We may have attained some freedom of mind but one's affective life may be in the thrall of stimuli. There is a way forward. We can have affects which are transcendent: "From this we clearly understand wherein our salvation, or blessedness, or Freedom, consists, viz, in a constant and eternal Love of God..." (E5p36s); "...the wise man,...is hardly troubled in spirit, but being, by a certain eternal necessity, conscious of himself, and of God, and of things, he never ceases to be, but always possesses true peace of mind"(E5p42s). Understanding Nature liberates us cognitively and also in our affects, as through this knowledge of Nature we come to have affects that transcend the common order.

Intellectual joy is the satisfaction one gets from intellectual inquiry: "When the Mind considers itself and its power of acting, it rejoices..."(E3p53). In the exercise of discovery the mind is aware of its intelligent power and feels glad in the successful action of its nature. This affection is nothing more than devotion to truth (Peters 1974, pp. 169-171). In a Spinozan education we will be concerned that people come to care about reason and its procedures and will want to understand Nature. This is surely right. We do not want people to be just good at reasoning but, also, to think that reason matters. Spinoza's view is that it would be astonishing for a being whose nature is to understand, not to feel a deep satisfaction when it can work out its nature freely: "...Man could neither be nor be conceived if he did not have the power to enjoy this greatest good"(E4p36s). In discovering eternal ideas the mind is aware of its own intelligent power and feels glad in the successful action of its nature. The joyful experience of rational knowing leads to the desire for new experiences of power and self-transcendence in intellectual pursuits. This is a personal experience of an activity which belongs to our essence. This is an affect connected to one's nature as a human being, and is not tied to something that has its being only within a particular culture.

Blessedness is the joy inseparable from intuition. It is a constant joy and does not arise from an increase in power: "If Joy, then, consists in the passage to a greater perfection, blessedness must surely consist in the fact that the Mind is endowed with perfection itself"(E5p33s). We experience ourselves as part of the whole. K. Blackwell (1985, pp. 141-144) cites Russell who describes this as a form of union of self and non-self. It is an experience of rapture in contact with Nature. We are

shocked out of ourselves. It is a feeling that we are eternal parts of Nature. In time we experience ourselves outside time. As Vladimir Nabokov puts it in his 'Speak Memory': "The highest enjoyment of timelessness...is when I stand among rare butterflies...This is ecstasy, and behind ecstasy is something else...A sense of oneness with sun and stone. A thrill of gratitude to whom it may concern"(Dijn 1990, p.154). As Deleuze (1990, p. 310) says, to be a part must be understood as an expression of the whole. Our essence is part of Nature in that Nature's essence explicates itself through ours. The free man will love Nature and particular things as they express the eternal features of Nature. He will love other human beings in knowing their eternal traits. This understanding is pleasurable (E5p32), indestructible (E5p37) and immune to suffering (E5p38). It is entirely independent of temporal contingencies. Modes loved in this way are loved in their eternal aspect. This is the tranquillity of mind of a person who enjoys authentic existence (Wetlesen 1979, p. 186). His tranquillity does not depend on anything external to himself. What is felt and experienced here is the essence of the body from the viewpoint of eternity. It is the joy of the sage who is scarcely moved in himself. It is a rapturous sense of unity with the cosmos at large. In the very pursuit of knowledge we produce an experience of ourselves as self-transcendent, in which we escape our ordinary concerns. Contact with this eternal world brings a strength and peace which cannot be destroyed by the failures of our temporal life. Bertrand Russell states that "In emancipation from the fears that beset the slave of circumstance he will experience a profound joy, and through all the vicissitudes of his outward life will remain in the depths of his being a happy man" (Blackwell 1985, p. 157).

By way of comment we can say that the pleasure of rational activity can't be upset by changes in the quality of the activity as this is invulnerable to such change. But, in reply, one could say that one's thought processes can become disrupted, and the exercise of reason can be vulnerable to circumstances, as one could be deprived of the resources for study. I think Spinoza's point is that although any activity can be interfered with, e. g. as a result of physical injury, the quality of rational inquiry is not transitory in a number of respects: it is valuable whatever the circumstances, whereas the value of finite things could depend on one's culture; the object of reason, being eternal truths, can never change and so one's satisfaction from these truths can never be disturbed. Spinoza states that "The intellectual Love of God, which arises from the third kind of knowledge, is eternal"(E5p33). It "...begets a Love toward a thing immutable and eternal, which we really fully possess, and which therefore cannot be tainted by any of the vices which are in ordinary Love, but can always be greater and greater..."(E5p20s). The quality of the satisfaction is a consequence of the nature of the object to which it is united. If one gets satisfaction from an activity which transcends one's circumstances, then the satisfaction will be transcendent: "Each individual lives content with his own nature, by which he is constituted...And so the gladness of one differs in nature from the gladness of the other as much as the essence of one differs from the essence of the other...there is no small difference between the gladness by which a drunk is led and the gladness a Philosopher possesses "(E3p57s). This is why the love of Nature is an affect inseparable from being free. The love of these ends cannot be disturbed: "There is nothing in nature which is contrary to this intellectual Love or which can take it away"(E5p37). So some things are more self-sufficient than others: contemplative activity being the most self-sufficient (E5p37). Also a love for eternal objects, in so

far as it reduces our concern for finite things, will detach us from these objects of desire.

#### **4. DETACHMENT**

An understanding of Nature liberates, not just because of the love we get from knowing Nature, but because this knowledge makes us less subject to the passive affects. We understand finite things as part of Nature. We see them coming and going in accordance with laws. This liberates us as we no longer become attached to particular things: just as a naturalist sees the death of fawns as determined by their presence in the ecosystem and consequently will not mourn their death. Instead he will find this understanding, of how their death is an instance of an unchanging pattern, intensely satisfying. In addition we will see things as determined by their causes, and will not feel emotions attached to a belief in free-will.

#### **DEFINING THE OBJECTIVE AND REACTIVE ATTITUDES**

The affective state of detachment involves the following three elements:

- (1) Behaviour is seen as the outcome of circumstances, e. g. seeing a delinquent's acts as brought about by his circumstances.
- (2) As a consequence one acquiesces in the occurrence. A widow may know her husband may never return, and adopts the objective attitude if she sees this death as part of the pattern of things and finds this understanding pleasurable (Ch4, p.92).
- (3) One studies the situation with a view to tackling the problems posed.

The following may be cited in support of the view that the objective attitude may be found in Spinoza's writings: "...Insofar as we understand God to be the cause of sadness, we rejoice"(E5p18s); "Nevertheless, we shall bear calmly those things which happen to us contrary to what the principle of our advantage demands, if we are conscious that we have done our duty, that the power we have could not have extended itself to the point where we could have avoided these things, and that we are a part of the whole of nature, whose order we follow. If we understand this.. that part of us which is defined by understanding, i. e. the better part of us, will be entirely satisfied with this, and will strive to persevere in this satisfaction...For insofar as we understand, we can want nothing except what is necessary, nor absolutely be satisfied with anything except what is true"(E4App XXXII). We are not agitated by regret and recrimination, but instead we have a state of tranquillity related to the love of God (Ch4, p. 89). The third element can also be found. Spinoza praises "...a judge who condemns a guilty man to death - not from Hate or Anger, etc., but only from a Love of the general welfare..."; for such a judge, Spinoza holds "is guided only by reason"(E4p63cs). One kind of detachment, then, is to view a person, including ourselves, as a natural creature whose actions and reactions we can understand and control. When you believe that things are happening as they must, when you see behaviour as instances of general behaviour, your attitude becomes less strident. When you view the entire universe as unfolding as it must then you can adopt a peaceful attitude to it.

This need not be the only form of detachment. The detachment we show to normal people may not be objective in Spinoza's sense. It could be controlled as opposed to emotional, impersonal as opposed to personal. This detachment need not involve a

belief in determinism, as we can stand back and see things in a detached way and still see x as free. So one can achieve detachment while still believing in free will, but this would not be Spinoza's view.

By contrast the attached feelings involve the following:

- (1) a belief that x is the sole cause of a situation; it may involve the belief that x did it intentionally but may not;
- (2) a change in one's well-being as a consequence of (1); E3p49 shows that if we imagine x to be free our hatred is greater;
- (3) engaging in a personal transaction with that person.

Consider one's reaction to a terrorist. If we adopt the objective stance we will see his behaviour as the consequence of various causes. We will view the event as illustrating the laws of nature, and see the terrorist as a problem to be dealt with. We will not experience a change in our well being on hearing of deaths and injuries caused to others. We will not experience resentment, rage and indignation. So we will deal with any situation in a cool methodical manner, approaching personal problems in the same manner as a car mechanic servicing a car. The virtues of this are that one will deal with problems in an efficient manner consistent with one's interests and not be distracted by emotional involvement. According to Hampshire (1979b, p. 301): "We can always regard the particular case of an emotion...as an instance or illustration, of a constant and unchanging pattern". This is criticised by L. S. Feuer (1964, p.217): "The soldier killed by a bullet is asked to rejoice in the laws of motion which govern the bullet's trajectory". I agree that adopting the detached attitude to all events is undesirable and may be seen as less than human (Ch5, p. 137). For a person to rejoice in the laws that are manifested in the murder of, say, his children, to see their death as just a variation in a part of Nature which as a whole does not change (Ch3, p. 66) (Appendix, p. 154), is less than we expect from human beings. On the other hand, the development of freedom towards greater detachment than most of us are currently capable of is one that is supported in this thesis; it is desirable that we all become less subject to the reactive states.

According to P. Strawson (1982, pp. 62-76), personal reactive attitudes are reactions to the quality of the will of others to us. Thus resentment is a reaction to being injured intentionally by someone. The generalised analogues of the personal attitudes rest on beliefs about the quality of people's wills towards other people, e.g. being indignant over the treatment of someone by someone else. Self-reactive attitudes are related to the quality of one's own will towards others, as where one is ashamed of how one has behaved. Spinoza acknowledges the reactive attitudes when he states: "Because men consider themselves free, they have a greater Love or Hate toward one another than toward other things"(E3p49s); "Repentance is Sadness accompanied by the idea of oneself as cause...Because men believe themselves free, these affects are very violent"(E3p51s). What disturbs men's minds is not events but their judgements of events. Events become good or bad by virtue of the attitudes we adopt to them. We can learn to detach ourselves from them. This will entail cultivating in pupils a detached pursuit of finite things. The result is a state of mind that remains unaffected by external matters and is calm, regardless of this or that turn of events.



### SPINOZA'S CASE

I will now consider if the type of freedom Spinoza advocates is attainable. According to Honderich (1988, Ch7), even if determinism is true and accepted, we may still be subject to feelings that tie us to particular events. Honderich asks us to suppose that if a man acts out of a clear knowledge of the consequences, the act was not compelled, and it was in keeping with his character; then we do have real grounds for feelings which are consistent with determinism: we can feel hatred for that person. Honderich says that we can transfer these conclusions to appreciative feelings. If a generous act of giving is an item in a causal sequence then it does not mean that the act was done out of internal compulsion, or due to external constraint. So certain conditions are sufficient for the personal feelings and are not threatened by determinism. We can still be subject to admiration and tenderness and tolerance, in so far as they flow from embraced desires. However, Honderich also says that those who could have done otherwise have true of them more than that they acted with knowledge, without internal constraint, in a normal maturity and without being subject to threat. Honderich says that we think that he as distinct from one of his desires could have overcome the desires which issued in action. A determinism which rejects this is inconsistent with feelings that embody such beliefs about origination. My view is that Spinoza's position is more radical than Honderich's, as he would rightly claim that both of the types of affects, mentioned by Honderich, are ruled out by determinism.

I will now consider if we can be free of the reactive attitudes. According to Strawson (1982, pp. 76-80), the human commitment to participation in ordinary interpersonal relations is too deeply rooted to be overcome by a belief in determinism; it is useless to ask whether it would be rational for us to do what it is not in our nature to do. Spinoza states: "...Reason demands nothing contrary to nature" (E4p18s). However, he does accept that abandoning these attitudes would be difficult: "The force of any passion, or affect, can surpass the other actions, or power, of a man, so that the affect stubbornly clings to the man" (E4p6). On the other hand, he believes that they can ultimately be overcome, as they rest on a false belief that one thing is a cause of a situation when in fact there are a multiplicity of causes. Spinoza's view is that, as we extend our knowledge of the actual causes of behaviour, the reactive emotions which depend on a belief in free-will will be undermined. To blame someone implies he could have done otherwise and that he originated the action. Now Spinoza may be thought to believe that the lessening of hatred, etc. requires only a belief that a person's behaviour was determined; it need not be a belief in a particular cause. But E5p6s implies that knowing the actual cause will be more effective. Spinoza states: "Love or Hate...is destroyed if...attached to the idea of another cause...". He goes on to say that if the thought that Peter is the cause of the affect is taken away: "The affect toward Peter is also diminished" (E3p48Dem). Strawson believes this is possible in particular cases but does not think that it can extend to all behaviour. I would say that if a knowledge of causes can undermine some responses it may be asked why it can't apply to all. Nevertheless, I think it is too optimistic to think that just a belief in determinism can overcome the intensity of anger and resentment, although Spinoza would say that if we believe this deeply it will have affective force. I would add that, if it is said that knowing the actual causes of behaviour is what is required, then we must ask, given the infinity of causes, how extensive one's

knowledge must be. I concur with Spinoza's view that it is extremely difficult to overcome some affects. There will be some cases where even a knowledge of the causes of a particular event will be insufficient to assuage these feelings, as when a person's parents have been brutally murdered in a concentration camp. I have already suggested that, as with this case, it would be less than human not to feel the reactive emotions at all. On the other hand the free man will, rightly, be less subject to them than the unfree man.

Spinoza says we do not feel pity for the deficiencies of the infant (E5p6s), because these have causes; but Bennett says this is not true as our lack of pity is due to the thought that they will grow out of them. One may still feel pity when one thinks about the bird's broken wing as being caused by certain events. Spinoza would say this is not possible if we know what caused the broken wing.

In E3p48 Spinoza says that hatred for Peter will be lessened if I think he was not the only cause. But the argument assumes that I have a fixed quantity of hatred to distribute among its objects, and so the more there are the less I will hate each: "If an affect is related to more and different causes which the Mind considers together with the affect itself, it is less harmful, we are less acted on by it..." (E5p9). This is wrong. As Bennett (1984, p. 339) points out, if one thinks that it was not just Peter but Paul who burned down my house one may still feel hatred for Peter. If I think of other causes I may come to hate them; so my disturbance is not reduced, just distributed more widely. The proportion of hatred to Paul may be reduced, not the total emotion. Also Spinoza does think one can find joy in contemplating the whole universe; so this shows that an emotion can occur even if we regard the full range of causes.

It may be said that the reactive attitudes are inconsistent with being rational. We can react to a neurotic by resenting his obsessions, while understanding that he can't help himself; but both can't be justifiable at the same time. So if the objective attitude is appropriate towards a person, the reactive can't be at the same time. Also Spinoza says that the retention of the reactive attitudes involves a lessening of our efforts to understand. Also reactive feelings can prevent the mind from thinking (E5p9Dem). Spinoza would say that the reactive attitudes involve a false view by seeing x as unitary whole. It is as fatuous to be angry with people as with a falling slate. I would say that if determinism is true then it would not be rational to hold attitudes that are inconsistent with it. My conclusion is that this form of freedom can be attained to some degree and the education system must find ways of developing it. I will consider further whether it is desirable to overcome the reactive attitudes (Ch5 p. 137).

Finally I will consider if we can become detached from physical pain by understanding necessity. In a complex organism the fate of single cells is not significant. Now, for Spinoza, Nature is a whole and its parts are not separable in reality. So the perfection of the finite mind could nullify the suffering of its finite phases. Adequate ideas are never devoid of affective value and could overwhelm passive affects. Spinoza claims the mind becomes united with Nature as a whole. "...our first birth was when we were united with the body...But our...second birth will occur when we become aware in ourselves of the completely different effects of love

produced by knowledge of this incorporeal object. " (ST 2, XXII). We can achieve some control over physiological processes. So perhaps pain can be transcended in an all-encompassing tranquillity called blessedness. Sickness is taken as an evil because we expect health; but each stage of life is what it is, and if we cease to think it ought to be something else we may experience less mental pain over our physical pain, and perhaps the latter may then be transmuted. Psycho-somatic illness has been well documented. But it may be said that pain can't be obliterated. Nevertheless evidence from Buddhist meditation (monks have burned themselves to death without apparently feeling pain) and psycho-somatic therapy bears witness to possibilities far beyond what is commonly believed. In view of Spinoza's mind/body parallelism the overcoming of mental anguish will overcome the physical depression associated with it, but how far the pain of some physical disorders, e.g. cancer, can be overcome by understanding the necessary order of things must remain highly questionable. It is also undesirable to eliminate pain as it can warn one of physical disorders.

## **5. RELATIVE FREEDOM**

### **AGENCY**

To remain free we must remain as agents capable of acting on reasons (Ch1, p. 22). The doctrine of the conatus implies purposive behaviour as humans seek ends. Within such activity we can distinguish between one type that involves intention and another that does not. Intention means the activity has to be explained by what an agent thinks he has to do to achieve some goal. Spinoza says "I really recognise no difference between human appetite and desire. For whether man is conscious of his appetite or not, the appetite still remains one and the same" (E3DefAffExp). These statements give an impression that if a man acts with a conscious purpose it makes no difference to what he does. Spinoza does use the notion of conscious purpose as an essential part of man's nature, and distinguishes between appetite and desire, saying he has not explained desire by appetite. To be conscious is to have an idea correlative to the modifications of the body, but to be self-conscious is to have an idea of an idea. The difference between desire and appetite consists in the fact that desire implies a self-conscious cognitive state, in which the behaviour is governed by the consciousness of an end which the person deliberately attempts to achieve through the exercise of his desires. If the act is intentional, then it is the conscious reasons for believing or desiring, which accompany bodily movement, that are relevant in the context of intentional behaviour. Spinoza's view is that to attempt to explain human behaviour by reference to conscious desire is to provide an answer to the question 'why did you do what you did?' in terms of one's reasons.

There must be an essential reference to an agent. I must originate these states. Spinoza states that "Desire is man's very essence, insofar as it is conceived to be determined... to do something... Desire is appetite together with the consciousness of it" (E3DefAff1). I think that Spinoza is implying that one must be an agent for freedom to be predicable: one is conscious of oneself as the author of changes in the world; secondly, one's thought and behaviour must be governed by reasons. According to Spinoza "The human mind is a thinking thing... these thoughts are

determined either by things existing outside the mind, or by the mind alone...those acts of thought which recognise no other cause of themselves than the human mind are called volitions. And the human mind, in so far as it is conceived as a sufficient cause for producing such actions, is called the will"(CM 1/277/20).

### TEMPORAL ENDS

To be able to act in the world is a minimum, although necessary, condition of freedom. We must pursue ends which make one freer within the common order. The first level refers to looking after the needs of the body; the second, not just to surviving as a biological being, but living well. The good life should take care of the temporal needs but emphasis should be on the intellect. These ends are contingent upon being human and thus do not involve the complete transcendence of contemplation: which is a value qua rational being, irrespective of one's human traits. According to Spinoza, the best life will be one maximally devoted to contemplative and scientific pursuits, in which all other activities have instrumental value. On the other hand, other pursuits are not all relegated to the sphere of passivity. Those that are essential to us qua human being will be more active than those that are not.

One such value in Spinoza's philosophy is the pursuit of pleasure. Spinoza does not advocate hedonism, but his philosophy does reject asceticism. Hedonism is a theory that only pleasure is valuable intrinsically. The goal of reason is to produce as much pleasure as possible. This gives us a single criterion for judging everything. There are some objections. Not all pleasure is valuable, i. e. from others' misery. Spinoza would insist that a life not plugged into a pleasure machine is better than one that is.

Both these objections show that there are other values besides pleasure, so that hedonism must be rejected. On the other hand Spinoza is correct in valuing pleasure as a good: "Pleasure and Pain are ascribed to a man when one part of him is affected more than the rest, whereas Cheerfulness and Melancholy are ascribed to him when all are equally affected" (E3p11s). It is part of the wise man to take pleasure in things. This is an important part of Spinoza's doctrine as the free man will enjoy his life. There is no Kantian subjection of the self to an unbending will.

The appetites are accorded a low value by Spinoza. The following gives the kind of reasons that one can infer from his text, although they are not all explicitly set out. First, the appetites are realised in activities which are unstable. An activity will be unstable either because it involves an internal sequence of changes, so it can't continue in the same way indefinitely; or because it relies for its occurrence on contingent circumstances in the world which may fail to be realised. Eating, for example, is unstable on both counts: because its structure prevents indefinite continuation; and because it depends on the presence of food, which may fail to be available.

The other reasons why the free man will not devote himself to the appetites are:

(1) The less time is spent on them the more time is free to be spent on transcendent pursuits.

- (2) The bodily pursuits impair not just the quantity but the quality of intellectual endeavour. They render it less continuous, less powerful, less able to attain truth.
- (3) They are not accurate as indicators of real physical need. If we listen to our body every time it registers a lack, we will be deluded into eating more than we need.
- (4) The appetites lead us to make false judgements, i. e. bodily activities are more important than contemplation.

A Spinozan education will move people from an excessive concern with their appetites. Such a concern is implicit in a vocational education which emphasises education as a means to obtaining a job; this being seen as a means to material happiness. Yet as appetites are part of human nature they must be fulfilled, otherwise the *conatus* will be frustrated. On Aristotle's view (M. C. Nussbaum 1986, pp. 142-153), we do not ascribe any independent intrinsic value to the activity of scratching. It is nothing a rational being would include as a component of the good life. If we never had itches we would not scratch. So no activity has positive intrinsic value merely because it satisfies a need. The appetitive pursuits are like scratching, as they are attractive to someone afflicted with something, but have no value in themselves. If we can view them from outside, and not from the distorting perspective of need, we will find them valueless. I think Spinoza's view, which I support, is that from the standpoint of the ordinary human being the central appetitive pursuits are not like scratching. If an activity possessed no intrinsic value for us it would be rational for us to accept any substitute that would procure the same desirable results. This is not the case with eating. We choose to eat rather than take a food capsule, because we find eating to be valuable in itself. We do ascribe intrinsic value to the bodily pleasures. It is from the viewpoint of one who no longer sees his characteristic human needs as genuine parts of himself that one could reject the associated activities as valueless. If we take the standpoint of total self-sufficiency then human needs can be condemned. Spinoza's view is that a limited pursuit of the appetites is consistent with freedom in so far as it is consonant with one's nature *qua* human being.

### PRUDENCE

Freedom does not just require that a human being possesses health, security and knowledge. These must be the result of one's own efforts (Ch1, p. 21). There are two aspects to this: (1) We understand the nature of the good life. (2) We determine the correct course of action needed in a particular situation to attain it. To be in charge of one's life is to live in accord with rational principles. We must deliberate about the value of ends and obtain information about means. Whether certain means are appropriate to given ends is a matter of information. Whether ends are appropriate as such is a matter of evaluation. As a rational agent I can't adopt G as a goal but be indifferent regarding the efficiency of the means to it. Nor adopt G as a goal but be indifferent regarding its value. We can judge that certain preferences violate our nature, impair our being and diminish our opportunities. Practical intelligence shows itself in the ability to judge well about one's well-being and how to achieve it. One works out the means, in particular spatio-temporal situations, of achieving given concrete ends. In this way one achieves freedom within the common order of nature (Ch1, p. 20). The practically wise person never loses sight of his *telos*, which

determines for him the nature of the good human life. It is possible to be merely skilled in thinking about how to get what one wants. Practical wisdom goes beyond this by having a correct conception of the good life which directs one's means. One must confront particulars with an eye to one's good. One's capability to be directed by reasons depends on: (1) possessing a conception of what counts as self realisation and how x contributes to it; (2) a concern to make it the case that one's life will realise this. In having a reason that stems from this concern we pursue ends, not because of the grip of circumstances, but out of this concern for our well being. We can have a picture of what matters which ceases to be a function of one's feelings at the time. We are not creatures who simply blunder from situation to situation, wholly taken up in each of them, but we are interested in our life having an overall direction and shape. Part of the task of education will be to enable pupils to form this conception and be able to act on it. The rational agent constructs a major premise which states what good is. One then considers, if such and such is the good, what means one must employ to achieve that good. In the daily business of deliberation we are vexed by the particularity of cases that present themselves for decision. We are cognitively at the mercy of each new event. We must obtain a system of practical rules that will prepare us for the demands of new situations. In considering a reason for doing something, e. g. attaining security, one must have general principles, such as taking the most efficient means, but there will also be empirical data. The more a person acts according to reason, the more will he seek to obtain well founded empirical knowledge of the possible alternatives of action before he evaluates them and makes his decision. Spinoza suggests that we must form a rational life plan: (1) One must not live moment to moment, following immediate cravings. Temporal position is not a reason for favouring one thing over another. (2) There must be no discounting of any of the basic values. (3) One must calculate, weigh and compare the consequences of alternative decisions.

Prudence is the deliberate application of human intelligence to the world, yielding control of chance. We can form a universal judgement about a group of similar things, forming reliable connections between a certain sort of treatment and a certain result. One does not have a series of ad hoc manoeuvres, but a principled course. This can be communicated in advance of experience since it groups many experiences together. A person will integrate all his ends in a balanced way. If one has a welter of aims one will be in perpetual conflict and ambivalence. If a person's goals are incompatible then he is not autonomous, as he can't avoid frustrating one of his desires. We must teach people to handle desire conflicts, otherwise they will be prey to this desire then that one (Frankfurt 1982). One must space satisfactions over time. We must learn not to satisfy a desire if to do so may be inappropriate. We must subordinate wants to what one values, e. g. stopping oneself smoking. This requires that we do not give priority to present desires, as we detach ourselves from what we feel at the moment and survey a longer stretch of our lives. We impose an order, with the global desires subsuming the lower order desires beneath them.

By way of comment one can say that some of the basic goods which form part of the life plan are not things it makes sense to think of controlling, e.g. assets like a strong constitution, and goods that come and go, such as friendship and love, which are outside rational control. Life planning may give rise to frustration as one's plans

may go adrift. But on the whole I accept that forming such plans enables one to rise above one's impulses and is thus desirable.

### PRINCIPLES

We have shown that the demands of self-directedness require that we seek appropriate ends for ourselves by having adequate reasons for our choice. The attainment of these ends will require that one's decisions are made in accord with rational principles. We can specify those principles which are inseparable from a free mind. The model of human nature defines a multiple goal structure, as it gives a picture of the needs of human nature. To the extent that a person is guided by reason he will endeavour to make decisions to attain this. So we need to budget resources (E4p60 p61). Rational desires must have regard for the whole person, while those contrary to reason have regard to some ends at the expense of others. A person will seek to develop his mind, and will prefer those means conducive to this. The needs of the body have to be met. But the free person does not pursue things that are not necessary (E4p26 and Dem). The free man will avoid the extremes of indulgence and asceticism: he will not be given to luxury but will eat with temperance; he will not be given to drunkenness but drink with sobriety; he is not given to lust but desires love; he is not given to avarice but understands the true use of external goods. A person will find a place for all such ends in his goal structure and will budget his resources to meet them. These are timeless principles; but the life one leads does depend on contingencies of time and place (E4p45s2). I will look at other rational principles. The passive person will base his decision to do *p* in terms of how it seems to him now. The free person will conceive *p* in a wider context, bringing in its consequences. The object must be evaluated with its effects. The value of the consequences of *p* is estimated on the basis of the utility in realising human perfection. If we think that *p* is a lesser evil and *q* a greater good, and *p* produces *q*, then we will think *p* is really a good; so we will desire *p* to attain *q*, as when we give up leisure to pass an exam (E4p65c). Other principles of a similar nature are given by Spinoza (E4p65d): one will prefer a greater future good before a lesser present one (E4p66); if the free person thinks *p* is better in the long run than *q* then he will choose *p* but if he is unfree he will choose *q*. Another principle is that we seek a lesser present evil which is a cause of a greater future good, and neglect a lesser present good which is a cause of greater future evil (E4p66c). We will not discount the value of the future. There is a bias in favour of present enjoyment. The judgements of the individual regarding his good are partial and one-sided. A rational person is free of the conflict between immediate and long term goals. He would choose the greater good whether in the near or distant future. We are able to form a true judgement of what is for our advantage as a whole (E4p66). We exist across time, so a reason about something we may do in the future would possess features that make it a reason now. If learning Italian were a dated reason there would be no reason to learn it now because we are not at present in Rome. Dissociation occurs when one sees oneself only in the present and not as an individual persisting through time (Nagel 1978, pp. 58-59).

A Spinozan education will enable people to embody these and other principles in their lives: not because they are useful as a means to whatever we desire, but because in following these principles we enable pupils to express their nature as free beings, and attain those ends which also constitute one's essence. And yet we must not encourage too much involvement, as the main aim is to concentrate on the eternal features of Nature.

### SELF-CONTROL

One will also be free if one can prevent one's pressing desires from governing one. This involves a person's propensity to conform behaviour to his decision about what to do. It includes self control, i. e. resistance to urges and to the show of emotions. K. Baier (1973, p. 106) says that self-mastery is a person's propensity to conform his behaviour to his decisions about what to do. It includes self control (resistance to urges), strength of will (resistance to threats and temptations), will power (resistance to pain and fatigue), tenacity (resistance to a desire to change one's mind caused by adversity), resoluteness (resistance to doubt and uncertainty). According to Spinoza temperance is the power of resisting immoderate love of good living; sobriety, drinking; chastity, sex; knowing the true use of money, avarice; modesty, glory and ambition; clemency, anger.

Each virtue is distinguished from the others by the passion it restrains; but all involve the one power of the mind. These virtues have the person as a whole in view, i. e. they restrain excess desires in the interests of the whole. As G. H. Von Wright says, the various virtues are so many forms of self-control (1972, p. 149).

## 6. MORALITY AND THE PERSONAL LIFE

The free man will have moral concerns (Ch1, p. 16). We must now consider the nature of these concerns. Some would say that in taking the moral point of view we are already adopting the impersonal point of view. The implication of Spinoza's emphasis on freedom is that moral development would extend this freedom. If one acknowledges the presence of a reason for something, one has acknowledged a reason for anyone to promote its occurrence, or at least to desire it if one is not in a position to do anything about the matter. This seems to be the implication of what Spinoza says. On the other hand, the *conatus* pulls in the other direction. My conclusion is that Spinoza resists the demands of the impersonal view when it pulls people away from their own development. Spinoza, rightly, places more emphasis on the individual and his own development. There is a tension in his philosophy between a desire to transcend particular standpoints and the viewpoint of the individual person. We can see this conflict in a different dimension. If the teacher helps others to become free, then as his development is no more important *sub specie aeternitatis* than anyone else's he has less time for his own development and will be less free. This, of course, is the problem of a finite being with a limited time span; it illustrates the conflict between acting in the common order and absolute freedom. Certainly morality is a candidate for freedom, as impersonal moralities derive their content from a view of actions *sub specie aeternitatis*. They do



not distinguish between oneself and anyone else, and reveal general principles of conduct that apply to oneself because they apply to anyone. From the impersonal point of view the fact that a person has a special concern for his own projects, like the pursuit of knowledge, is only one element in the decision (Ch5, p. 136). To develop freedom in the affects requires the person to act as if he had no further concern for his projects once the impersonal assessment was in. This may seem to produce the result that the welfare and the projects of others should be accorded as much weight as my own and those of the people I care about. I should be as impartial between myself and others as I would be between people I don't know. I must recognise that objectively I am no more important than anyone else. My happiness and misery matter no more than anyone else's. The problem is that the development of the impersonal standpoint leaves the person behind and conflicts with the *conatus*. I do not agree with Wetlesen (1979, p. 254) that Spinoza would advocate this devotion to others, but one can't rule it out. I will look at its implications, as this is a direction a Spinozan education could take on this interpretation.

We might think of an impersonal morality developing in stages. The lowest level is pity. Here the person transcends his own narrow concerns, but only because he is moved by events within his particular environment. This constitutes passivity. Spinoza is correct in his view that compassion shares many undesirable features with passive affects: emotions are transitory; they are weak and subject to variations in our mood; they are controlled by and responsive to considerations other than moral or rational ones. Emotions are directed towards and occasioned by particular persons in particular circumstances. They do not have the generality required by morality, and involve partiality. They are not based on principle. I might feel compassion for A but not for B, though A's and B's situations are identical. On Spinoza's view, if one acts from pity one acts according to how one feels and not according to the moral requirements of the situation. Our feelings for different people differ independently of how we morally ought to act toward them. A moral motive can't be unreliable in these ways. It must always be available to us and guide us consistently and reliably. Only a purely rational motive can do this, independent of the vagaries of our feelings. On the other hand, to act from altruistic emotion need not be to act from impulse. Also pity is desirable for those who are less rational as this can encourage a concern for others. Spinoza is correct in that, being subject to pity, one is not free from spatio-temporal contexts. Yet it can also be seen as a moral motive such that to be lacking in pity is to lack a human virtue (Ch4, p. 109). One cannot condemn pity out of hand; nor does Spinoza (E4p50).

Consequentialism (Scheffler 1982) can be seen as a good example of impersonality. The complete development of freedom in the affects would be to promote projects in abstraction from oneself, and to devote one's energy to attaining most good in the world irrespective of its location in particular people. It is a universal standpoint that does not distinguish between oneself and others, and reveals general principles that apply to oneself because they apply to anyone. The utilitarian ethics is consequentialist. It bids us do what will produce the best effects on sentient experience at large, without giving any extra weight to its effects on one's own experience. It singles out the impersonal calculus as identifying the right course of action no matter how the agent's own projects may have fared at the hands of the

calculus. Consequentialism requires agents to allocate energy to their projects in strict proportion to the weight *sub specie aeternitatis* of doing so. But the essence of personal judgements is that they view the world from a vantage point within it, and their subject is the locus of that vantage point. The impersonal view provides a view of the world without giving one's location. One is just a person among others. Shifts in grammatical person can't alter the sense of what is asserted. In adopting the impersonal view one is viewing oneself as merely another inhabitant in the world. So one does not care whether what one cares about happens to oneself or not. The widest scope is the whole human race. The ego can be expanded to take others' interests into account as if they were one's own. The viewpoint of the universe involves viewing things impersonally without bias to particular persons. In a conflict between A and B impersonal self-enlargement results in a view of issues irrespective of the person. The wish to benefit strangers no less than family is due to the impersonal perspective that removes accidents of birth and personal acquaintance. We judge the good of any other as our own. One can see impersonality in morality as removing from consideration those qualities which particularise the individual. The impersonalist might add that one should weigh the personal point of view in one's overall assessment from an eternal perspective. But he denies that personal projects have any weight independent of the weight in the impersonal calculus.

Having set out that being free could entail viewing actions in abstraction from one's own concerns, I will now see how far the impersonal concern can be taken within the terms of Spinoza's thought. Spinoza does not seem to favour maximising the perfection of all beings: "From them it is clear that the law against killing animals is based more on empty superstition and unmanly compassion than sound reason. The rational principle of seeking our own advantage teaches us the necessity of joining with men, but not the lower animals, or with things whose nature is different from human nature...because the right of each one is defined by his virtue or power, men have a far greater right against lower animals than they have against men. Not that I deny that the lower animals have sensations. But I do deny that we are therefore not permitted to consider our own advantage, use them at our pleasure, and treat them as is most convenient for us. For they do not agree in nature with us"(E4p37s). It would appear that non-sentient beings would be treated in the same way. This passage highlights one central conflict in Spinoza's philosophy, in that the doctrine of the *conatus* gives centrality to one's own advantage, while viewing the world *sub specie aeternitatis* seems to pull away from this: "A man strong in character considers this most of all, that all things follow from the necessity of the divine nature,...whatever he thinks is troublesome and evil...arises from the fact that he conceives the things themselves in a way that is disordered, mutilated, and confused...he strives most of all to conceive things as they are in themselves, and to remove the obstacles to true knowledge, like Hate, Anger, Envy "(E4p73s); "We do not here acknowledge any difference between mankind and other individual natural entities... Whatsoever an individual does by the laws of its nature it has a sovereign right to do"(TPT XVI, 201).

But a Spinozan education may not be inconsistent with encouraging a love for all animals and plants. I will show how this can be defended within the spirit of his thought. I have shown that self-realising beings have inherent worth (Ch1, p. 14). To say that x has inherent worth is to assert that a state of affairs where the good of x is

realised is better than a similar state in which it is not realised. Using this and the kind of arguments detailed in the appendix (Appendix, p. 145) one could find in Spinoza a justification for respecting other beings.

We can refer here to F. Mathews (1991 Ch4). We can see our own striving to persevere in our being replicated in other beings. To the extent to which we don't affirm this value we detract from our own. The world is an expression of selfhood, a cosmic will to exist. Everything calls forth a certain reverence in the light of its participation in this act of self-realisation on the part of Nature. We can see a deep kinship between ourselves and other living things, each responding in its particular manner to realising its own good.

When we recognise the involvement of wider wholes in our identity an expansion in the scope of self-love occurs. This leads to a loving attitude to the world. We experience life differently and the love that was beamed inwards to our personal egos goes outwards illuminating everything around us. The deep ecology movement calls for the identification of all humans with all life forms. To distance oneself from Nature is to distance oneself from a part of that which the I is built up of. I am related as subsystem to a nested series of parent systems up to the level of cosmic self. The identification is not a psychological affair but is grounded in the metaphysical fact of interconnectedness. Each new sort of identification corresponds to a widening of the self. The way we are is as connected to the whole. To represent us any other way is to misrepresent us. To harm the universe is to harm oneself. This is of clear relevance to global warming but we need not develop the arguments here.

Another argument is as follows: it might be said that the measure of intrinsic value would be the power of self-maintenance. The value of the amoeba is limited as its power of self maintenance is slight compared to that of humans. The greater the autonomy of an organism the greater will be its self-realisation and the greater its intrinsic value. But the identity of a self-maintaining system is relational. To exist by eating krill is part of what it is to be a blue whale. The logical connection between the parties closes the value gap. The intrinsic value of a given self may be a function not only of its own power of self-maintenance, but also of the intrinsic value of many other species of organism on which the power depends. Given the web of interconnection, then it would be misguided to assign higher and lower values to specific kinds of organisms. The intrinsic value of a given self is a dual function of its power of self-maintenance and its interconnectedness to other selves. Every part possesses a value which it inherits from the value of the whole.

But it may be said that the arising and passing away of particulars is of no concern to my larger self, the cosmos, since its continued existence is consistent with this flux. On the other hand, my identification with the larger whole means I can't be indifferent to the life forms the world presents. To participate in their conatus involves a sense of love for them.

It could be said that the destruction of particulars is of no consequence, since they are re-absorbed into the energy system. But, in reply, it could be said that we have the will to exist, and so has the ecocosm. This means we should do what it does, and enrich the environment. The conatus of the individual helps shape the wider system

by sustaining its conatus, by maintaining the specialised environment which provides for the conditions for the emergence of self-realising forms. Just as the possum mirrors the nature of the forest, so the nature of the forest mirrors that of the possum. The possum helps make the forest what it is. The conatus of the individual helps sustain the conatus of the system by maintaining it in existence. My will to exist now encompasses wider systems of Nature.

Some focus on something general such as ecological systems. It is these larger wholes that are accorded normative standing. The values to be accorded plant life are resolvable into its place within a larger whole, much as an eye acquires its value from its role in a functioning body. For other writers, plant life has a normative standing independent of its contribution to some ecological system. Once again either implication could be found from a reading of Spinoza's philosophy.

It is said that human capacities are more valuable. But to whom? P. Taylor (1986, pp. 129-131) agrees they may be more valuable to humans; but from the standpoint of an animal, speed may contribute more to its good. And Spinoza does say that good is relative to the beings we are. Taylor says that what matters is the way capacities are organised. They are interrelated functionally; so the organism as a whole has a good as a whole. Since all beings have an organised structure there is no difference between humans and other living things. In reply we could say it is in their character as self-conscious rational moral agents that their inherent worth resides. But Taylor says that all that is relevant to the ascription of inherent worth is teleological organisation. The content of capacities plays no part. Distinctively human capacities will have greater value for humans, but only for humans. This does not mean that we can use this for the ascription of greater worth to humans than plants. But Taylor's own enterprise must presuppose the pre-eminence of moral considerations. The good of organisms that lack the capacity for reasoned moral reflection must be regarded as of lesser inherent worth than the good of organisms that possess that capacity. How else can Taylor explain the weight he expects from his appeal? To say that we belong to the biotic community, as do other living things, obscures that we have conscious mastery. We have an advantage over other animals in this. I would contend that this is Spinoza's view; and this could obviate an attempt to draw an ecological perspective from his thought using this line of argument.

From Spinoza's thought we may see a richness of experience as intrinsically good. The greater the diversity the greater the stimulus to our distinctive capacities. An impoverished environment will diminish human life. One could regard the richness and diversity of life as an independent value; and there is a tendency to suggest that the value of life derives in part from its innate tendency to produce a proliferation of forms. The normative implication is that steps should be provided to preserve and promote the diversity of forms. So in a conflict between species we should decide in favour of that which is scarce. Diversity can thus be seen as a global expression of the conatus.

According to Sprigge (1984, p. 171), if men do good we may love them, as we get pleasure from seeing people act on eternal principles, e.g. not being fraudulent. A human being must understand Nature, and this includes understanding the sufferings and desires of humans and animals. This will bring with it a concern that these

sufferings be checked, as represented inside our consciousness, their concerns become secondary desires of one's own.

The ecological perspective just outlined could find support within his philosophy. But my contention is that the development of one's own nature is what, rightly, forms Spinoza's central concern.

## **7. SELF-REGARDING TRAITS**

The fundamental trait of the free man is that he is concerned with his own development. From this we can specify the virtues, active affects, essential to the free man, and the vices, passive affects, of the unfree. Those affects which involve a defect of cognition will be unfree, as one will have failed to rise above one's standpoint. "...the more we strive to live according to the guidance of reason, the more we strive to depend less on Hope, to free ourselves from Fear, to conquer fortune as much as we can, and to direct our actions by the certain counsel of reason"(E4p47). I start with the affects of the unfree man which by implication are those the free man will be without.

1. One group involves ingratiating oneself to others. Love of esteem is a joy accompanied by the idea of some action of ours which we imagine that others praise (E3p30). Our judgement that others praise us is an imaginative idea, meaning that we do not know the reasons why they praise us. It is based on a misconception of the attitude of others to us, possibly flattery by others who have an interest in humouring us. We are likely to be disappointed later when their reasons are revealed. The idea which the individual has of himself is determined by the idea or opinion which he imagines others have concerning him. He esteems himself as he believes others do. The free man will be independent of the opinions of others. His pleasure will come from knowing Nature. The striving to do something and omit something solely to please men is ambition. This is the immoderate desire for glory (E329s). The endeavour to do what pleases the common herd is so strong that we can harm our interests and those of others when we strive to retain our reputation (E4p58s). Shame is sorrow for an act which we imagine others to blame. Spinoza rightly deprecates the state of mind of most people who by following every fad are swallowed up in the common order: a state which our current education system makes no attempt to address. On the contrary, by relating education to the changing trends in the economy, what for Spinoza is a vice is for many people a virtue. For these people it provides access to material possessions, for Spinoza it makes people dependent on those who are unfree.

2. Ambition is also a striving to bring it about that others follow what one loves (E3p31s). Here we have the vice of domination, where we try and get others to pursue those temporal ends which corrupt us. This is institutionalised in the current education system, intent as it is on fostering in pupils the cult of consumerism. By contrast, Humanitas or Piety is a desire from reason, as he who strives from reason to guide others acts with steadfastness of mind (E4p37s1). So the free man will try and help others to become free as far as is consistent with his own development. What we need is proper influence.

3. Unfree people pursue temporal ends to excess, thus preventing them from concentrating on their natural goal. Gluttony is the immoderate desire for eating (DefXLV). Greed is the immoderate desire for wealth (DefXLVII). Drunkenness and lust are immoderate desires for drinking and sex (DefXLVI, DefXLVIII).

4. Unfree people suffer from misconceptions of their nature. Pride is thinking more highly of oneself than is just (E3DefXXVIII). By contrast, self-esteem is joy born of the fact that man considers himself and his own power of acting (E3DefXXV). The free person will feel satisfied only with what truly enhances his being. He will also avoid despondency, which is thinking less highly of oneself than is just (E3DefXXIX). He will avoid humility, which is a negative consciousness of what we have not.

5. Hope (E3DefXII) involves ignorance of Nature and is therefore to be discouraged. Hope is declared as an inconstant pleasure. The element of doubt is intrinsic to hope. This is a metaphysical blemish as hope presupposes doubt. The whole ethical struggle of man is from the level of confusion to clarity. But to move to certainty will be at a price. One's love for others must rest on hope as it can't be guaranteed. There is also Honderich's point that part of the value to us of our hopes is their uncertainty (1990, p. 144). Confidence is passive as he says it presupposes hope (E3DefAffXIV). Although doubt has been removed it is not the same as certainty, as one is imagining the event has occurred even though this is not the case. The important point in a Spinozan education is to develop understanding, so that one's views have firm foundations and we will not be subject to disappointment.

6. One who is free will seek the good directly and will not be governed by fear; so: "A free man thinks of nothing less than of death, and his wisdom is a meditation on life, not on death" (E4p67).

7. The virtue of a free man is seen to be as great in avoiding dangers as in overcoming them. The free man will not be foolhardy or reckless. I will consider fear in some detail. Spinoza says that presence of mind in the face of danger is a species of firmness, which implies it is an active emotion (E3p59s). On the other hand, Spinoza does say that he who is led by fear, and does what is good to avoid evil, is not led by reason (E4p63). According to Delahunty (1985, p. 234) there are two kinds of fear in Spinoza's account. One kind he calls Timor, is defined as follows: "Timidity is a Desire to avoid a greater evil, which we fear, by a lesser one" (E3DefAffXXXIX). The other kind Spinoza calls Metus: "Fear is an inconstant sadness, born of the idea of a future or past thing whose outcome we to some extent doubt" (E3DefAffXIII). Metus is an episode of anxious dread about some outcome, without being able to do anything about it. He who does good in order to avoid evil through this kind of fear is not guided by reason. So if one pursues knowledge only from anxiety about being scolded by one's parents if one does not, then one is not being led by reason. Here we have a person who acts in approved ways not because they are inherently attractive to him; but because he is terrified of the consequences of not doing so (E4p63). J. Neu (1977, p. 84) says that fear in Spinoza can never be active but may be appropriate. Neu does not cite evidence for this but I think that Spinoza's other account of fear can help. Fear as timor is the willingness to put up with something nasty to avoid something worse. In this kind of fear the active emotion is presence of

mind in danger. This particular point illustrates the general thesis that *sub specie aeternitatis* fear is passive, but that we have to live in the common order of Nature, so that some fears can be appropriate and less unfree if they are based on a rational assessment of the situation one finds oneself in. In the case of timor the emphasis is less on the emotional tone than on the coercion of the will. Consider someone who lives sedately, which he hates, to avoid something worse, i. e. going to hell. If we conjoin this with E4p65, where we act from reason when we follow the lesser of two evils, then we can see that if a person's fear of *x* is reasonable then he acts from reason if he avoids *x* by doing *y*. If the fear is not reasonable then doing *y* to avoid *x* would not be the mark of the free man. Delahunty (1985, p. 234) says that this makes fear active and abolishes the contrast between acting from reason and from fear; but Neu's point is relevant here. Fear will never be completely active *sub specie aeternitatis*, as we are responding to events in the common order, but it can be appropriate. So if a person stays at home for fear of being bullied at school, he is governed by reason if the fear is justified. The argument in E4p15 says that where desire follows from true knowledge of evil this danger to our conatus can be understood through our essence alone. Using this account of fear, I suggest that some passive emotions may have an element of activity if they are based on some grounds. Spinoza says some emotions are intrinsically bad, such as envy, derision, contempt, anger, revenge and hate, as they alienate humans from each other and involve false ideas. But he does think that fear, repentance and humility have some value in restraining people (E4p54s). One would assume that fear that was totally without foundation must be wholly passive. On the other hand, shame that has some grounds may be partially active. It would appear that no case of hatred, anger and vengeance would be justified, and an education for freedom must ensure that pupils are not subject to these emotions at all. I present a summary of the traits of the free person later (Ch5, p. 131).

## **8. OTHER -REGARDING AFFECTS**

Spinoza thinks he can deduce from the principle of self-preservation the necessity of a genuine concern for the well-being of others. Spinoza moves from the identification of self-realisation with freedom and knowledge to a conclusion regarding the social nature of man (Appendix, p. 145). The general principles Spinoza uses to justify concern for others can also help establish the other-regarding affects. I will consider what responses to others are entailed by being free, and hence must form the aim of a Spinozan education.

1. A free man always acts honestly. This is puzzling as it conflicts with the conatus (Ch1, p. 15), also with his view that one can preserve one's being by acting deceptively. He says that deceptive behaviour is contrary to reason as it leads to social conflict. The problem with this argument is that it takes the assumption that deceptive behaviour is reasonable when necessary to preserve life to be equivalent to the assumption it is reasonable under all circumstances. Given the latter is wrong the former is. But this entailment does not follow.

2. He who lives under the guidance of reason will repay hatred with love (E4p46). Another party has bestowed a negative value and a rational person will repay it with

positive values such as love. In practice this may not be possible. We may respond instead by being loyal towards the legal procedures, as the free man does not take revenge (E4p51s). If one returns hatred with hatred one will be caught up in a negative spiral. According to E3p43 this vicious circle can be broken and transformed into a virtuous circle if the person can repay hatred with love (Wetlesen 1979, p. 255). The free man will desire that others are liberated from hatred and as a means to this he will respond with love and generosity. Hatred is bad because to injure another thinking thing hinders our push towards self-maintenance as a thinking thing (E4p46).

3. "A free man who lives among the ignorant strives, as far as he can, to avoid their favours" (E4p70). This is necessary in order to preserve one's independence. This is because, as Spinoza says, the ignorant will value the wrong things, and so will be saddened, leading to hatred when they see the free man does not value the same things. Others could expect similar things in return from oneself. I would add that, consistent with Spinoza's thought, receiving presents could make one feel that relations must be expressed in material terms. Suppose A confers on B what he takes to be a value such as money. If B does not repay in kind he will hurt A's feelings. But if he does return money he runs the risk of being involved in passive affects. So it may be best to decline a favour. But this refusal may awaken the hatred of A. We must be careful in declining favours so that we do not seem to disdain them out of greed. This could lead to others hating one. But the free man must not completely reject help: "For though men may be ignorant, they are still men, who in situations of need can bring human aid" (E4p70s).

4. It may be necessary to rearrange group affiliations to fit in with just free people. "Only free men are very useful to one another, are joined to one another by the greatest necessity of friendship" (E4p71Dem). As a result "...we strive to benefit one another with equal eagerness for love" (Ibid). Also "If he lives among such individuals as agree with his nature, his power of acting will thereby be aided and encouraged...if he is among such as do not agree at all with his nature, he will hardly be able to accommodate himself to them without greatly changing himself" (E4AppVII). We need a positive and supportive environment for those who are to attain the higher degrees of freedom. We will seek to reduce interactions with unfree people to those areas necessary to maintain society. This will clearly be a problem for the Spinozan teacher: "For, of all the things which are beyond my power nothing is more esteemed by me than to be allowed to have the honour of entering into the bonds of friendship with people who sincerely love the truth" (Ep. XIX). He goes on to say that it is impossible to dissolve the love as it is founded on truth.

5. Thinking more highly of someone than is just, out of love (E3DefAffXXI), gives a false preponderance to people's qualities and will be discouraged in an education for freedom. Likewise thinking less highly of someone than is just (E3DefAffXXII). Envy (E3DefAffXXIII) is hate in so far as it so affects a man that he is saddened at another's happiness and glad at his ill-fortune. This will be discouraged, as one's true happiness can only come from knowing Nature.

6. Shame is a sadness accompanied by the idea of some act of ours which we imagine others to blame. The wise man will never do an act for which he is ashamed



(E3DefAffXXXI). But Spinoza says that like pity, shame can indicate a desire to live honourably. Therefore if one is not completely free it may be better to feel reasonable shame. Pity is sadness and is useless, as one who is easily touched by the emotion of pity, and is moved by tears at the misery of another, often does something he afterwards repents. But Spinoza says that he who is moved by neither reason nor pity is rightly called inhuman, for he seems dissimilar to a man(E4p50).

7. Gratitude is a desire to benefit one who has benefited us from a like affect of love. Benevolence is the desire to benefit one whom we pity. It is desire born of pity. So we will encourage people to benefit others from reason.

8. Vengeance is the desire from hatred by which we are roused to do evil to one who has injured us. Anger is a striving to do evil. Both are absolute vices.

9. Clemency is not a passion but a power of the mind wherewith man moderates his desire for anger and revenge. I present a summary of these traits later (Ch5, p. 132).

## **9. METHODS**

If we are to become free we must overcome the passive affects. Spinoza states: "...I shall treat of the power of reason, showing what it can do against the affects..."(E5Pref). In Chapter Three I discussed the methods for improving the intellect. I will now look at methods for dealing with the affects. Using these methods we can rise above the common order and their use is itself a condition for being free, as we will have formed our states for ourselves (Ch1, p. 21). Clearly many of the methods outlined below which might imply Freudian therapy will not be carried out in a school context; and those that do not rely on changing thoughts might not be taken as educational methods. The person in his quest for freedom should utilise methods himself if he is to be able to originate his states (Ch1, p. 21). Spinoza does not minimise the difficulties: "From this it follows that man is necessarily always subject to passions, that he follows and obeys the common order of Nature, and accommodates himself to it as much as the nature of things requires" (E4p4c). I pointed out (Ch1, p. 30) that methods are needed to stimulate the drive to enhance one's being. Spinoza does not directly address this problem, but one could say that undermining the passive affects will liberate this drive, as "The force of any passion...can surpass the ...power of a man, so that the affect stubbornly clings to the man" (E4p6).

Spinoza says that an affect cannot be restrained or taken away except by a stronger one (E4p7). So unless a person is concerned with truth then a recognition that an affect was ill founded would have no effect.

In many cases the affect can be altered if the belief integral to it is changed. This is because emotions are in part constituted by beliefs: "...If someone sees that he pursues esteem too much, he should think of its correct use, the end for which it ought to be pursued, and the means by which it can be acquired..."(E5p10s). This shows how a passion can be transformed into an action. I agree with Neu (1977, pp. 88-89) concerning the importance of therapies that rely on thought. This is also central to the views of Peters on the education of the emotions (1974, pp. 182-186).

For Spinoza, we can make a man better by making him know better, but not by telling him that he is making a mistake in getting angry, as there are deep causes at work. What makes theft bad is not the energy. What is bad is that it does not serve one's nature. Even the thief is seeking his own good, and we need to give him reasons why theft does not attain it. This involves correcting the evaluation regarding the importance of something to one's well being.

New evidence may not be enough. We may have to direct our energies to something else: "If we separate emotions, or affects, from the thought of an external cause, and join them to other thoughts, then Love, or Hate, toward the external cause is destroyed, as are the vacillations of mind arising from these affects" (E5p2). But as Bennett observes, subtracting the thought may still leave us with the affect.

"An affect which is a passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it" (E5P3). Delahunty (1985, p. 265) thinks that Spinoza represents this as a necessary truth; that once we understand an affect, it will be eliminated. But if I learn that I love money because it is associated with something else, the affection need not cease. E. Caird (1910, pp. 276-7) says that to have a theoretical knowledge of the passion can't mean we are exempt from its control. I suggest that this is true in some cases, but in others knowledge can work. Caird thinks that knowledge works where we see ourselves identified with a universal order in which we are a part. We adopt an impersonal view to our wants. Delahunty says we can't construe E5p3 this way; but it is a view that can be found in Spinoza's thought. Delahunty raises the objection that this would make love of something which is just one's own irrational. Also, even if I regard my interest as no more important than anyone else's, the craving for food still exists; and the same will go for the emotions. My fears for my survival will go unabated even if my own survival matters no more than anyone else's. Delahunty is not quite correct here. If one really regards one's own interest as no more important than any one else's then one can't feel aggrieved. Hampshire (1979b, p. 307) alludes to the idea that once I understand the contributing causes within myself, the idea of the cause disappears. Bennett disagrees (1984, p. 350), as he can't think of anything in Spinoza's text that can be read in this way. But this is consistent with Spinoza (E3p15); and if one realises that one is associating x with some incident in one's past then this knowledge, as in Freudian therapy, can work. Bennett's statement that he doubts that it looms large in psychotherapy ignores Freud.

Another method is as follows: "...So that the affect itself may be separated from the thought of an external cause and joined to true thoughts" (E5p4s). Suppose x is envious of y. He can overcome the envy by seeing this as an illustration of the workings of some law. One can study one's own affects just as a psychologist analyses a patient.

"Insofar as the Mind understands all things as necessary, it has a greater power over the affects, or is less acted on by them" (E5p6). By understanding something as necessary the mind has greater power over the affects (Ch4, p. 93). Sprigge (1988b p.7) suggests that we attain this by a humanistic psychology where people develop an insight into the motivations of others. According to Saw, if we are to live well then knowledge of particular individuals is far more useful than knowledge of the laws of

human behaviour. Knowledge of general laws may be a hindrance. People who rely on general laws want a label attached to each person, like thinking of someone as an introvert. It is *this* person we must understand (Saw 1972, p. 116). This would fit into my account of intuition. Nevertheless, as my account of explanation showed, we must have a mechanistic grasp of laws of association to attain the kind of explanation and liberation which will show things to be necessary (Ch3, p. 73). I would suggest that both approaches will be adopted in a Spinozan education. This can be illustrated thus: people demand love instead of exerting themselves to earn it; or feel they have a right to expect love, not realising that ego interests change and attractions wane. This realisation of the ego interests of man can help us relate realistically to other people and prevent trauma. So a clearer understanding of the egotistical aspect of human nature will lessen our disappointments. Because we realise that everyone is trying to promote their own interests, we are prevented from feeling anger etc. at what they do.

The cultivation of the love of truth will be an important factor in overcoming the passive affects: "There is nothing in nature which is contrary to this intellectual love or which can take it away" (E5p37); "Affects that arise from...reason are...more powerful than those that are related to singular things which are regarded as absent" (E5p7). We can be so preoccupied with the development of knowledge that we are less affected by passive affects. For Spinoza the intellectual emotion which arises from the beauty of a proof in mathematics, while less intense than a passive one, will outlast it. For unless the object of the passive emotion is present the emotion will fade. An intellectual emotion can always be revived. In my view this is not true: one can feel envious of a person even if he is not present. Nevertheless it is true that if one is insulted then, whilst at the time one may be annoyed, one may feel nothing even when one recalls the insult. Hampshire (1979b, p. 308) says that knowledge of causes will bring liberation, as it substitutes free activity for the passive reaction. So active thinking can quell an unpleasant passion. Bennett (1984, p. 337) says it can, but so can swimming. This is an unfair comment as Spinoza would take thought to be more enhancing than swimming.

Hampshire (1979b, p. 314) points to Spinoza's recognition that to overcome some passive states we will have to overcome the unconscious forces determining these states. D. Bidney (1940, p. 392) says that Spinoza has no account of the unconscious, as the mind is necessarily conscious of all that occurred in the body (E2p12). Bidney does say we are ignorant of the causes of our ideas, and this implies the notion of unconscious desires, but Spinoza does not make use of unconscious forces. Spinoza explains insanity as due to changes in the body (E4p39s). This in itself is relevant as it implies that some emotions can be cured by working on the body. I agree with Neu (1977, pp. 74-75) who says that Spinoza does leave room for the unconscious, as appetites are desires without self-consciousness. The relevance to the passive affects is that there are causes of which we are unaware. So if we can form a clear idea of the affect then we can bring these hidden causes to light (E5p3).

It is also important to ensure that principles have a motivating force: "The best thing, then, that we can do, so long as we do not have perfect knowledge of our affects, is to conceive a correct principle of living, or sure maxims of life, to commit them to memory, and to apply them constantly to the particular cases frequently encountered

in life. In this way our imagination will be extensively affected by them, and we shall always have them ready" (E5p10s). We should internalise norms so that the imagination is deeply affected by them and they will be on hand whenever we need them. We can be taken by surprise by events in the common order and will need to respond quickly in the light of these principles if are to remain free. If we apply them to case studies then this will give us practice when we encounter real examples. I discuss the role of the arts in the next chapter, but I suggest that a limited role could be found for them, in this respect, where case studies of people behaving in various ways could be drawn from literature.

One could overcome fear by getting a person to think of some immediate object: "An affect whose cause we imagine to be with us in the present is stronger than if we did not imagine it to be with us"(E4p9). A person who is fearful of an impending exam could be brought to concentrate on more immediate happenings.

The first part of (E5p10) implies that there must be certain periods of seclusion set off for detachment from temporal concerns.

Also the development of executive virtues can help overcome passive affects (E5p10s). The evil passions can be overcome by integration rather than suppression. We should become less fixated with certain things. The evil passions are engendered when they become over-differentiated in relation to the needs of the whole body. So we reintegrate and restore the due proportion in relation to all the needs.

It is the personality structure of the individual which determines his evaluations of what is good and bad. In order to overcome particular responses we must address the main orientations of individuals. According to Hampshire (1987, p. 110), a method of salvation is for the person to understand that his responses are due to his struggle to enhance his being; and what is felt as a frustration to this drive will be perceived as painful. When one value has been accepted it opposes the acceptance of other values not consistent with it. People may accept their inferiority as part of their self concept, and this blocks improvement (Lecky 1951, p. 179). Understanding this drive to maintain particular values will be a start to overcoming them.

Spinoza believes that behaviour can be modified. His remarks on the influence of education on opinions point in the same way (3AffDefXXVII). He says that it is no wonder sadness follows acts that by custom are called wrong, as "This depends chiefly on education. Parents - by blaming the former acts...and praising the latter acts - have brought it about that emotions of Sadness were joined to one kind of act, and those of Joy to the other. " Praise and blame can act as dynamic forces, as each individual living within a community is influenced by them. The fear of punishment and hope for reward are two species of hatred and love, and will determine the desires of the person. Fear and hope include remuneration. These affects can counteract the evil passions, but only at the price of bondage to other passions. Being a lesser evil they are in one sense good (E4p54s) (E4p50s). The most effective way to influence people's behaviour is by making them see their true advantage. But if all else fails, it may be necessary to blame them in order to influence them in the right direction. We can also offer external rewards but only to those who are unfree. Free men do not expect external rewards as virtue is its own reward. In a Spinozan

education we would develop intrinsic motivation (Ch4, p. 89) (Peters 1970, pp. 61-62).

By learning to discriminate the accidental from essential features of things we can avoid the former associations. Thus the claustrophobic person need never shun the enclosed place, as one could couple space with pleasant affects by a process of deconditioning. But merely telling a person is not enough. Spinoza says it takes an emotion to curb one.

We can transmute a desire into an active form through knowledge. So the desire that others should live according to our way of thinking (E5p4s) leads to contention; but when guided by reason it is the desire to persuade others to know Nature, and is called piety.

Spinoza maintains a parallelism between mind and body: what is done to the body is done to the mind. If a person controls the mind he controls the body and vice versa. Therefore we should engage in corporeal exercises that are conducive to the sensitivity of the body (E5p39s). Spinoza's point is similar to ideas which have been common in certain eastern traditions. In yoga, for instance, a calm state of mind is accompanied by smooth breathing and an agitated state by rough breathing. So a Spinozan approach to the control of the affects could endorse the formal exercises of the Hindu hatha yoga such as bodily postures and control of the senses, and the informal ones of the Buddhist way of mindfulness, such as awareness of the body when one is walking, standing and sitting (Wetlesen 1979, pp. 142-154).

A man's passions may be so strong that only a physical treatment of these bodily states will succeed (Hampshire 1977, p. 86): his fear may be lessened by a chemical agent. But, as Hampshire says, there are only rough associations between bodily and mental states.

Consistent with the theme of this thesis, all can benefit from a Spinozan education as we can all be more free than we are at present. People must endeavour to apply these methods to their affects as far as they are capable of doing so. In the very application of these methods they are enhancing their freedom as they are, themselves, bringing about changes in their affective states.

## **CHAPTER 5 - LIBERAL EDUCATION AND SPINOZAN EDUCATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I will compare Spinoza's conception of education as developing transcendence with some significant contemporary accounts of education. These provide interesting comparisons and contrasts with Spinoza. I have also selected these accounts as they are representative of many recent accounts of liberal education.

### **1. JOHN WHITE**

#### **WELL-BEING EQUALS GOOD.**

White's conception of education is similar to Spinoza's in that both see it as aiming at the pupil's good understood as well-being. They differ on how they view well-being and thus education. White (1990, pp. 28-34) says that well-being must be identified with the satisfaction of informed desires; but not with desire satisfaction, as we could, for example, have a desire for food items which we later learn are contaminated and we would not in that case think our well-being is promoted. Also, if we satisfy some desires, then this may not contribute to well-being if one resents them. I may have an intense desire to smoke but prefer not to smoke. The satisfaction of higher order desires counts more towards well-being (1991, p. 11). To achieve well-being one must achieve one's major goals in life. Spinoza would say that willing endorsement is not sufficient, as one can endorse ends not consonant with one's nature. White roots our well-being in desires and their satisfaction and makes it intelligible in terms with which we are familiar. It makes the individual himself the final arbiter of his own good. It underpins an education which avoids the imposition of value judgements on the pupil. Does this mean on White's view that if pupils have a strong interest in horse racing then the school curriculum must be given over to a study of form? The answer is no. He rejects the view that there are no standards. White says that the liberal rejection of the imposition of values, and the idea that we should acquaint pupils with different values, presuppose choice as a value. White provides a more restrictive substantive definition of well-being. He builds in those ends based on our biology and culture. He says (1982, p. 49) that we possess, as a permanent feature of our constitution, a set of natural wants shaped by culture into particular forms. He says that there is a non-negotiable framework of personal relations, bodily desires and personal projects.

Such a broad approach would be accepted by many who would want schools to pass on the main values of society and cater for pupils' needs. But the advantage of Spinoza's view is that we can form a view of good beyond people's current desires and society's values, whilst at the same time recognising that something can't be good if it is not a possible end for human beings. Spinoza rightly holds that our culturally embodied self is not the real one. Well-being is defined in terms of those potentialities one has qua free being. White rejects the view that freedom, morality

and intellectual pursuits constitute our well-being regardless of whether anyone wants them (1990, p. 33). Suppose X is said to be valuable for P but P does not desire X. White questions how X can be valuable. So a person brought up to disdain the pursuit of knowledge would resent pursuing it, and knowledge could not be a good for him. This is contrary to Spinoza's view, which I endorse, since Spinoza sees this pursuit as constitutive of one's nature and part of well-being. Yet despite White's strictures, he is writing into his account of education society's values, which some people may not accept. This comes out clearly in his account of science, which he thinks should relate to understanding the structure of society and hence help us attain material needs (1991, p. 19). But suppose pupils come from home backgrounds where they have developed an interest in understanding Nature in the way outlined in this thesis. Having this desire subverted in the way he suggests would not only render them unfree in Spinoza's terms, but would involve imposing on them ends which they resent pursuing, such as consumerism. The virtue of Spinoza's account is that it roots values in reality, rather than in the temporary fads of a particular cultural stage.

### AUTONOMY

According to White, autonomy involves freely determining one's life, and includes selecting goals for oneself (1990, p. 22). He quotes Raz: that the ruling idea is that people should make their own lives (1990, p. 98). White distinguishes a weak and a strong sense of autonomy. In the former we make choices. In the latter we reflect on basic social structures (1990, p. 100). White does not see autonomy as involving transcendence of spatio-temporal circumstances. He would agree with J. Feinberg who states: "We must not demand total transcendence of the culture of one's time and place, for the autonomous Reason even of the authentic man will be at the service of some interest and ways of the world that are simply given him by the *Zeitgeist* and his own special circumstances" (1973, p. 162). White says that in our day-to-day existence we are not detached spectators of our lives but are engaged in activities within it. The object of our attention is not life taken as a whole but something more local (1990, p. 87).

### AUTONOMY AND WELL-BEING

In his earlier writing, White (1982, pp. 50-52) says that personal autonomy is a necessary feature of flourishing, and that its promotion is required in any education that seeks to cultivate pupil's well-being. It could be said that once educated into autonomy the pupil may say he preferred never to be autonomous. White's answer is that to encourage freedom is to help pupils to cope by selecting ends. We could encourage them to rely on others to resolve conflicts in our desires, but others do not know best. R. Godfrey (1984, pp. 115-116) points out that people may prefer to be free from the autonomous life. In so far as they have been made autonomous by educators they may blame them. Autonomy is no less of an arbitrary imposition than a traditional Islamic education. So here we have a rejection of freedom as an aim of education. In reply, White (1984, p. 119) says that if aiming at autonomy is wrong then the only alternative is to encourage blind obedience to authority, and this is unreasonable. White says that the strength of his case is that educators have a duty

not to let pupils fall into the clutches of those who claim to know how life should be lived. Here we have a defence of autonomy; not by appealing to it as being part of human nature but as enabling one's desires to be satisfied.

Later (1990, pp. 25-26) White takes a stance in line with the view put forward by Godfrey, which he had earlier rejected. Freedom is not written into well-being but is a feature of well-being in societies such as ours. White says that Raz has argued convincingly that autonomy is not part of well-being (1990, p. 99). We are part of a culture whose institutions presuppose reflectiveness. He says there are positive grounds in favour of non-autonomous conceptions of well-being. In a traditional society personal well-being consists in the satisfaction of one's most important informed desires. A person who had most of his major desires fulfilled can be said to have had a life of greater well-being than someone who had them frustrated. The autonomous way of life is not the best in every set of circumstances. It can't be justified for people in traditional societies. For a person in such a society to be autonomous there would have to be a range of options from which he could choose, which by definition would be unavailable. He would have to be educated in the ways of autonomy that are ruled out in his society. If a person in a Muslim society has her major aims fulfilled, e. g. marriage to a partner chosen by someone else, then she has attained well-being even though she did not select the person. In a later study (1991, p. 11), White says self-determination is not for the privileged few but is a universal ideal. Yet my criticism of White is that even here self-determination is not an end in itself but a means to help one select ends. White says that it is a universal end within a liberal democratic society, which fits in with his earlier view. This low emphasis on autonomy contrasts with Spinoza who rightly sees it as a good for all humans. My view is that White's defence of autonomy is weak, as even in an autonomy-supporting society people may get away with a limited amount, and freedom is an exercise concept (Ch1, p. 19). Also, why should the education system not try to change this back to a traditional society if autonomy has no intrinsic connection to well-being? There is no intrinsic value in having an autonomy-supporting society. We can criticise the larger purposes of society, as he advocates, and come to see that an autonomy-supporting society is less desirable. On the other hand, how can this be done on White's view? We can't compare societies. We can't say that an autonomy supporting society is less desirable than a traditional one. In our society people may come to see autonomy as a necessary evil. We have to make choices to survive, but this does not mean that we value autonomy any more than a child who has to eat his greens. An education for autonomy will be less secure in its foundation. The woman who selects a suburban life as a housewife, and who never exercises her autonomy, may well end up having lived a fulfilled life in her terms. An educational system geared to autonomy may not be suitable for people like that and they might find autonomy a burden. White says that strong autonomy, i. e. criticising social conventions, can make one alert to manipulation; the obstacles to well-being could be political. Understanding what might promote one's health can't be separated from knowledge of social health policy. Yet people may be quite happy not exercising this freedom.

White's conception of autonomy has some affinities to freedom of control (Ch1, p. 21). Even in terms of control we have a limited view. One does enough in White's view to attain one's informed desires, and after that it would seem that autonomy



may be no more valuable than watching 'Neighbours'. Autonomy is one activity out of many one could decide to pursue, after having engaged in the requisite minimum needed to lead a happy life. The sense we get from Spinoza of a person vigorously developing his character, and in so doing attaining self-realisation, is lacking. For Spinoza, the more one controls one's states the more one actualises one's being and the more one attains one's good. The methods for developing the intellect and the affects are not just pastimes one might like to engage in, but the necessary means to and expressions of freedom. This is not how many in education would view freedom. The virtue of a Spinozan education is that it would show people the true nature and value of freedom.

### KNOWLEDGE

White's conception of knowledge, and hence education, is radically different to that of Spinoza. White (1990, p. 107) says that promoting pupil's well-being involves not only extending and helping them organise desires, but equipping them with knowledge about the objects of their desires. Here the kind of knowledge that is to be imparted is that which will enable people to satisfy their desires, not which promotes freedom qua transcendence. White says that if you hold personal autonomy to be an aim of education this brings with it certain requirements to do with knowledge, as we must have some understanding of options if we are to choose major life goals. White's (1990, Ch7) view is that coming to value something presupposes knowledge of a certain sort: working with others for shared goals depends on knowing what these goals are. This is constitutive knowledge. Instrumental knowledge is helpful in realising values. Attached instrumental knowledge depends on values a person already possesses. Unattached instrumental knowledge can lead to certain ends for which we don't have the desires yet. White says that children should be brought up to desire such things as physical pleasures, including food and sex; personal relations; the avoidance of pain and injury to themselves; protection of their own and others' rights; benevolence extending beyond their immediate circle, etc.

The aim of education is to enable pupils to be able to select ends within these areas, and knowledge is needed for this. People are to be brought up to take a delight in the company of friends and family. This presupposes constitutive knowledge both of a specific sort – about friendship – and general knowledge of human beings. To avoid pain to oneself, one needs constitutive knowledge of types of pain and of threats such as sickness and poverty. Instrumentally one must know how misfortunes may be caused. Unattached knowledge is excluded, i. e. knowledge that could be used for some end or other but which is not useful to a person realising any of his current desires. This includes history or physical science that can be taught in a hived-off way, never becoming linked to one's personal values. White (1990, p. 127) says languages are not relevant if they are not attached to present desires. He challenges the orthodoxy that maths and technology should have a privileged place in the curriculum. He complains that history and physics are not taught in a way linked to one's personal values. However, in a later study (1991, p. 14), he does say that knowledge can be pursued to give pupils an acquaintance which they can then choose for its own sake. But the main theme is maintained, as science is needed to

understand our society and thus help people meet their material needs. It and maths can enlarge the range of options from which people can choose their ends. So the learning which is important is that which helps us orientate ourselves in the society in which we live. This is confirmed later (1991, p. 15). He says that the main reason for studying these subjects will be for the light they throw on contemporary life. He does say we should understand the place of human beings in nature and in the universe; but this is just one element as opposed to the main objective, which it would be in a Spinozan education.

White says that the arts are important as forming a range of options that we can then select. He says that people will make arts a priority, so we must introduce people to them. Works of art can cause us to see and feel conflicts more sharply. We can approach our own conflicts by contemplating their counterparts in others. He says that education should focus on those personal qualities needed for autonomy. We need courage to withstand fears. We need the disposition to weigh one kind of desire-satisfaction against another in cases of conflict, and the resoluteness to stick to the desire which we think should outweigh the other. We can help children cope with value conflicts by reading literature and class discussions. So autonomy is valuable as we live in a society where the capacity to choose is a necessity. The kind of knowledge we need is what will help us choose and be choosers. This is a radically different conception of the content of education to Spinoza's. Knowledge is of contingent matters. There is no sense of knowledge that exemplifies freedom. Studying nature will only be worthwhile if it can help pupils realise their particular projects. Science and mathematics will not have the liberating status that they have in a Spinozan education. This education will not take pupils beyond their current position in the radical way Spinoza advocates.

## **2. DAVID COOPER**

The account of Cooper which follows is based on Authenticity and Learning (1983) Chapters 1 and 4. Cooper understands freedom in terms of self-expression. In this respect his account is similar to one aspect of Spinoza's account, where an education for freedom will aim to enable people to express their nature (Ch1, p. 12).

An education based on Cooper's view would involve assessing things in relation to one's self. A familiar disturbance is where the policies and values of a school are not those to which the teacher can subscribe. One may not agree to the assumptions on which mixed ability teaching is based or to the emphasis on vocational education. The teacher is unfree as he must agree to views that are not his. This is a familiar situation, where one experiences alienation in relation to one's environment. We must be prepared by the education system for the following: playing a role in situations by working out how they relate to oneself; asking whether common sense ideas about how we organise our workplaces, act in our intimate relationships, become politically involved, fit the reality of our lives. A person is not free if his projects are not grounded in a genuine assessment of himself. The free person considers the significance of death or parental ties in relation to himself. Is death to be regretted, should I leave something behind me? One makes beliefs one's own by

working out the importance of things to one. In working out one's stance one does so from the point of view of the outcome that is significant to oneself: does one want it to be true of oneself that one accepts society's roles?; is it important for one's identity to agree with the attitudes that are features of one's sex? These questions are barely touched by the current education system, except marginally in careers education where pupils can be asked to consider a job that suits their temperament. Lessons on social issues rarely approach issues in these terms. Situations call for attitudes to be adopted, e. g. falling in love, encountering persecution, being faced with poverty. The human condition is constituted by those situations which humans find themselves in. Understanding a situation is to grasp the actions it calls for. Education would help people to express their nature through situations by enabling them to work them through in terms of their own nature. For this we need to know what we are and how situations may be changed to reflect this. We need to stand back from the flux of events and adopt a stance. This standing back is itself an exemplification of freedom. Cooper says that as the aim is to know how situations bear on one's nature then liberal education is not relevant. It is true that it can provide information relevant to philosophical understanding, but even here it is just a means and little knowledge is needed.

We can see in Cooper's account some of what would take place in a Spinozan education. Pupils would assess the human condition by working out their responses in a way which expresses their true nature. An example, from Spinoza, would be where one would repay hatred with love or avoid responding to suffering with pity. The differences are that Cooper plays down the importance of knowledge, as we have seen. Extensive knowledge is not necessary for one to work out one's responses. In addition, Cooper's education is directed towards coping with situations, whereas in the case of Spinoza this is only a small element in the path to freedom. The main element resides in understanding Nature as an end in itself. In an education based on Cooper's view one's focus is to relate oneself to events in one's spatio-temporal environment whereas for Spinoza one's main concern is with eternal ideas. A Spinozan education would thus exhibit a greater degree of transcendence from situations than that of Cooper.

Cooper's account also differs from Spinoza's as Cooper's view of freedom stresses doing things not just assessing. On Spinoza's view, theoretical knowledge is not just a prelude to action. On Cooper's view, situational concern is of no use if it does not lead to action. Concern is geared to what I can undertake. The term 'situation' refers not just to a mere state of affairs but to what calls for attitudes to be taken, decisions to be made and plans adopted; although there is a similarity to Spinoza in that both do recognise the importance of being a source of change.

A further difference between the two is that Spinoza says that man has a nature *qua* man, and therefore there are criteria for deciding if people are expressing their nature. Cooper sees self-expression in more subjective terms. Pity may be an authentic response for some people but not others. This is something one has to work out for oneself. It would seem that the educator cannot offer any guidance on this.

Cooper can throw some light on what might be done to promote freedom qua expression. But his strictures against a liberal education are misconceived as, in its transformation in a Spinozan education, it would lead to self-realisation.

### **3. CHARLES BAILEY**

According to Bailey (1984, p. 20), a liberal education liberates the person who receives it from the present and particular. The liberally educated person is capable of responding to the stimuli of his present and particular environment in a way that is in contrast to the animal. The extent of the escape is the measure of the liberal education received. The liberating elements are fundamentality and generality. All children are born into specific and limited circumstances of geography, social class and personal encounter. Education may entrap or confirm a person in the limiting circumstances of birth, or it can be a kind that widens horizons, increases awareness of choice and reveals prejudices. So much Spinoza would accept.

But Bailey is advocating an education in which the standards are still relative to one's culture. His transcendence is from the parochial to the acceptance of consensus standards. Also Bailey does suggest that freedom could be defended by showing its use in enabling us to cope with our environment. The problem is that Bailey, like White, defends knowledge in terms of its use in enabling one to make meaningful choices (1984, p. 29). He says that the general utility of liberal education is a logical consequence of its characteristics. The more fundamental the knowledge the more useful it is. This is because fundamental knowledge underlies particular choices and decisions. Fundamental understanding is intrinsically worthwhile yet it has utility for anything we are likely to want to do. Understanding economic principles could help one make money. One needs to know how much education should emphasise this aspect compared to the value of principles as such in achieving liberation. A Spinozan education rightly emphasises the latter. This contrast with Spinoza comes out in Bailey's view of truth. Bailey does not think that beliefs have to be true. The truth condition can never be satisfied. When one shows a belief is wrong one shows it to be less justifiable than another. Science progresses by replacing beliefs justifiable in their time by beliefs that are more justifiable. This could be seen in terms of a coherence theory of truth, but unlike Spinoza's account it has no grip on absolute truth (Ch2, p. 41). According to Bailey, there is a considerable likelihood that many of our true beliefs will have to be replaced (1984, p. 140). There can't be any sense of 'true' that is more than 'the most justifiable belief' we can get. He thinks that we have been led astray into thinking that the certainty obtainable in the truths of logic is to be sought in other areas. A dogmatic attachment to the idea that there are truths and falsities, and that education is concerned only with truths, can lead to odd practices. A pupil can be told that he ought to believe something because it is true. But Bailey's claim that to involve pupils in knowledge is to involve them in the evidence, is consistent with a Spinozan education. 'Statement p is true' implies that 'statement p ought to be believed because there are good reasons for believing it'. Despite the fact that Bailey places freedom at the centre of his conception, it falls far short of the liberating nature of the view being supported in this thesis.

#### **4. PAUL HIRST**

Hirst puts forward the idea that one must teach the categories that are distinguished at present: "As distinct from a Kantian approach, it is not my view that in elucidating the fundamental categories of our understanding we reach an unchanging structure that is a priori in all rational thought in all times and places. That there exist any elements of thought that can be known to be immune to changes making transcendental demands on us I do not accept" (1974, p. 92). Hirst says that nothing can be supposed to be fixed eternally (1974, p. 93). There is no reference to a reality that is independent of all perspective. Hirst does say that although concepts are established by convention, the truth and falsity of judgements are thrust on us by what is the case. There must be something other than the rules themselves that determines judgement (1974, p. 94). He is unwilling to accept the view that reality is socially constructed. He believes that if we do not allow the given to play a part in determining our application of criteria, this will destroy the objectivity of our judgement. He says that we make judgements in relation to our form of life. Hirst's view is that a necessary feature of knowledge is that there should be public criteria whereby the true is distinguished from the false. It is the existence of criteria that gives objectivity to knowledge. The problem of objectivity ceases to be a problem of identifying what lies beyond us, and becomes a problem of identifying human actions that ensure objectiveness. He says that education is a matter of learning a language which is public and within which we can say what is true and false. This is shown (1974, p. 93) when he says that the framework sets the limit to what is intelligible. But who decides if the framework is correct, as Hirst says it is not fixed? Hirst says we must teach the categories that our particular society regards as standard. On Hirst's view, what makes a line of inquiry objective is not what it is about, but the practices of adjudication and confirmation with which it is conducted. This approach would then include subjects on which there is some agreement on what is correct; whereas on a Spinozan approach only those subjects that put one in touch with reality as it is in itself will be included. Also the decision procedure for Spinoza does enable us to form ideas that reflect reality, as it transcends all perspectives; whereas for Hirst this procedure is what is accepted by society as the correct one.

According to Hirst, if a symbolic judgement is objective then initiation into it is a necessary part of liberal education. As a result it will have a claim to be in the school curriculum. It will not have to compete for inclusion even with other forms. So great has been the influence of Hirst's view that teachers of Physical Education have felt it necessary to represent their discipline as a form of knowledge. This approach would be in the spirit of a Spinozan approach. One works down from freedom to the content of education through what is involved in being free. Hirst works from public objectivity down to the curriculum. Those subjects that promote objectivity will be included in the curriculum. Yet Hirst's approach is too limiting as it entraps people within the accepted conventions. One objective of an education for freedom is to learn to distinguish separate orders of knowledge: the one having to do with lived history, the other with adequate ideas. In so far as education is concerned with empirical matters it must stress their contingent nature and inferior status compared to the eternal truths. This has no place in Hirst's conception.

### COMMENTS ON THESE WRITERS

No subject can determine that we should pursue it. Simply because there is physics that does not mean we should teach it. In a Spinozan education, it is the fact that a subject enables us to transcend the common order and put us in touch with what is the case that underpins its pursuit. The conception of knowledge put forward by the writers we have considered would lock pupils within their culture. Knowledge is seen as instrumental to choosing not, as with Spinoza, the constitutive expression of freedom. There is no sense of realising oneself through knowledge. Knowledge is seen as being relevant to people only as a means to their desires and, ironically, instead of liberating them, it cements them in their unfreedom by enabling them to attain those ends set by the common order. The education system subserves the common order instead of leading people out of it. Those who speak of knowledge for its own sake are rarely advocating the acquisition of knowledge that will pay no dividends. People will appeal in terms of sharpening critical sense and enabling one to select a better way of life. Theoretical knowledge will help pupils cope better with the society in which they live. But, in my view, this emphasis on the present is self-defeating, as pupils will come to be influenced by what is immediately present and will disdain long-term planning. They will then not even be able to operate adequately in temporal matters. Anything not related to their immediate desires and concerns will be met with the retort 'what's the point of this?'

According to A. Bloom (1987, pp. 36-41), the modern approach to education involves thinking our way of life is no better than any other. No longer is there a hope that there are wise men in other places and times who can reveal the truth about life. The present education system is geared to relativism. Liberalism taught us that the only danger confronting us is being closed to the new. No attention was paid to the fundamental principles or moral virtues that inclined men to live according to them. Today the education system is geared to openness; people believe that their preferences are accidents of time and place. The curriculum propagandises acceptance of different ways of life. The lesson to be drawn is that different ways of life are equally good. Much of the curriculum is devoted to studies that deal with events in time. The point is not to think you are right at all. I agree with Bloom that we can't remain content with what is given by culture. The teacher's activity must be guided by something beyond him that provides him with a standard for judging students' achievement and capacities. Only a dogmatic assurance that thought is culture bound makes our educators so certain that the only way to escape the limitations of our time and place is to study other cultures. In the current education system courses change as public opinion changes. Knowledge comes to subserve the passing desires of the moment. The education system in so far as it is concerned with freedom enables people to make choices within culturally defined options. This much of Bloom is in line with mine and Spinoza's thinking. But Bloom places the arts as a central aim of education and we shall see that these have a relatively small place in a Spinozan education.

### FREEDOM

Spinoza's conception of freedom is a corrective to the limited conception put forward by the writers we have considered. This impoverished view is in line with recent

philosophy of education, and is both a cause and consequence of the current malaise of the education system whereby it does not aim to liberate people from their limited standpoint.

According to R. Young (1980, p. 573), we can examine our beliefs and overcome the forces of socialisation. But Young is incorrect, as socialisation can shape the beliefs we deploy to assess our states. Young shifts this to whether socialisation has shaped one's introspective faculties. But we can be socialised not to reflect on some things, and there is no acknowledgement of transcendent beliefs.

S. I. Benn, like Young, is drawn to the thought that autonomous people must move beyond socialisation. We do this by making our beliefs coherent, although we must have constructed this coherence through reflection. Benn (1975, pp. 127-128) does say people must test the beliefs but that does not say how profoundly. Now coherence is not tied to a particular culture. But coherence is not enough as all the coherent beliefs could be encultured, and Benn accepts that we can't move beyond our culture.

R. F. Dearden states that "Freedom is intimately connected with the notion of reason, even if not with actual truth" (1975, p. 66). By contrast, Spinoza considers there is a necessary connection between reason and truth. It is difficult to understand how a person could be free and be governed in his thought by principles that were false. If this were the case then the content of one's principles would be irrelevant to freedom. This means that any principles would do for freedom. Dearden's emphasis on the ability to assess wants and beliefs is not sufficient, since the assessment may be in accordance with conventions.

## **5. MARY WARNOCK AND THE IMAGINATION**

In this section I will look at the views of Warnock on the imagination. Some of her account relates to that stage which Spinoza calls the Imagination, some to the fictions which are part of it. What follows can be understood to be Warnock's account, but the comparisons with Spinoza are mine. This account may also be taken as representing, for many, the virtues of developing the imagination. Later I will develop this account further through looking at the Romantic view of poetry. I have selected Warnock and the Romantic view as they represent what many people may see as the value of works of art, whilst recognising that this is just one aspect. There is insufficient space in this thesis to evaluate the arts.

I will begin with her book Schools of Thought. Warnock says that if a particular study can be shown to increase the imaginative powers of a child, then there is a case for including it in the curriculum (1977, p. 153). Warnock says we must concentrate on educating the imagination. If the imagination is the seeing or hearing, in what is presented to us, of more than would immediately meet the eye or ear, then the educated eye or ear will do better (Ibid, p. 161). Educating the imagination must have its roots in the immediate sensory experience of pupils. Its starting point must be the retraining of the senses themselves. To hear a melody depends on imaginative

interpretation and this is done better with education. The teacher must induce in the child a habit of reading, looking and listening. For Warnock, the value of the arts is that they retrain the senses. This would contrast with Spinoza, where the senses are important only because they provide the material for illustrating eternal laws (Ch3, p. 64). For Spinoza, the transformation of the senses takes one beyond them into the eternal processes they manifest. But, for Warnock, a worthy imagination involves accuracy of perception. Fancies detached from real circumstances can obstruct vision. Spinoza would at least concur with this.

For Warnock, the imagination gives people the means of realising their feelings. Education must not be just of the intelligence but of the feelings too. Also without some sense of there being something which deeply absorbs our interest, human life will be experienced as futile and boring. The main test for including a subject is that it will ensure the absence of boredom and ennui for the rest of the child's life (Ibid, p. 162). We can be certain that the pleasure of the imaginative emotion will not be exhausted, because it is not a pleasure just attached to certain limited experiences. It is part of the actual creation of the experience. Children can't be taught to feel deeply, but they can be taught to look and listen in such a way that the imaginative emotion follows. If a particular study can be shown to increase the imaginative powers of a child it is a strong candidate for inclusion in the curriculum, given that it offers the child the possibility of a better life than he could have had without it. But if one learns too many subjects then one's imagination can't be fired up. There is a strong likelihood that specialisation will be less boring and will give greater play to the imagination. It is only by considering a thing deeply that one can begin to enjoy it. There should be time for pupils to pursue their own bent, and this means to specialise in the subjects which develop the imagination. We develop the imagination not just through creative self-expression but also through knowledge of what others have written. To perceive great works of art is to be acquainted with one's own feelings and those of mankind as a whole. The contemplation of natural beauty is just as central to education as the contemplation of works of art. Direct experience of beauty can be as crucial to imaginative development as it was to Wordsworth (Ibid, p. 162). The contemplation of natural beauty is important; so, for example, one must take pupils out into the country. It is a genuine deprivation if a child has no opportunity to listen to sounds that are the 'ghostly language of ancient earth' (p. 152). For Warnock solitude must be provided for this: a sentiment that would fit Spinoza's although for different aims.

The following ideas are from Warnock's book Imagination (1976). Imagination is involved in all perception of the world, in that it is that element in perception which makes what we see and hear meaningful. The creative character of the imagination is manifest, even if nothing is made except the significance to the observer of the world he perceives. This already contrasts with Spinoza, for whom imagination does not go beyond what appears to the senses. To hear a melody rather than mere sounds is to exercise the imagination. The imagination is the power to see possibilities beyond the immediate, to perceive the boundlessness of what is before one. We can see in the canvas the subject who is not present but whom we feel exists in it. Both artists and spectator have to detach themselves from the world, to think of objects in a new way as signifying something else. The imagination in its creative role may see quite ordinary objects as significant in a new way. Hume and Kant had seen the connection



between the imagination as it functions in our ordinary life in the world, and the imagination of the poet or genius. Here we have a similarity to what Spinoza calls supposals (Ch2, p. 48). Imagination is an active combining power which brings ideas together. So I may form the idea of a dark, purple, soft fruit, tasting like an apple and symbolising the origins of the universe. Imagination is creative in that it can construct what it likes from the elements at its disposal. It is free to join ideas together in any way it pleases. For Warnock, it is the freedom from slavery to concepts of the understanding. Imagination can create new domains and break with the given. Imagination allows us to envision possibilities in or beyond the actualities in which we are immersed. We escape in thought the bounds of reality. This contrasts with Spinoza for whom freedom, rightly, involves being governed by reason and not being able to think what one likes.

Warnock says that the artist and the scientist discover design in nature, but the artist also becomes a creator of objects. Warnock cites Schelling who says that if the artist were to subordinate himself to nature and reproduce the existent he would not produce works of art. Thus he must withdraw from the created thing, but only to raise himself to the level of creative energy. The artist ought to emulate this spirit of nature which is at work in the core of things.

I will develop some of these themes by saying a few words about the romantic view of poetry. All references are to M. H. Abrams (1971): the comparisons with Spinoza are mine. The romantic view sees a work of art as the internal made external (Ibid, p. 22). The primary source and subject matter of a poem are the attributes of the poet's mind; or if they are aspects of the world they are these only as they are converted from fact to poetry by the operations of the poet's mind. Poetry proceeds from the soul communicating its creative energies to the images of the external world: the criteria for good art being whether these are the natural utterance of emotion or the aping of poetic conventions. The first test any poem must pass is not 'Is it true to nature' but 'Is it sincere? Does it match the feeling of the poet while composing?' The work ceases to be regarded as a reflection of nature (Ibid, p. 23), as it yields insight into the mind of the poet himself. Abrams cites J.S. Mill's view of poetry, where all reference to the external universe disappears, except to the extent that sensible objects may serve as stimuli for poetry; but then the poetry is not in the object itself but in the state of mind (Ibid, 24). Mill wrote, in a review of Tennyson, that these poems excel themselves in the power of creating scenery in keeping with some state of human feeling. The poetic imagination represents objects as they are moulded by feelings into a variety of shapes and combinations of powers.

There is an element in romantic art where we become integrated with the external world through participating in its creation, and sharing with it attributes of one's own being. But, and here is a contrast with Spinoza, the participation is through the faculties of sense (Ibid, p. 65). Abrams cites Wordsworth who "felt the sentiment of Being spread O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still". This is an experience of the life within us and abroad which cancels the division between animate and inanimate subject and object. Coleridge (Ibid, p. 68) sees the perceptual mind as projecting life and passion into the world it apprehends. The end of poetry is to produce excitement, in co-existence with an overbalance of pleasure (Ibid, p. 103). The mind transforms the cold inanimate world into a warm world united with the life

of man. As the vehicle of an emotional state, poetry is opposed to the unemotional assertions of science as it originates in the primitive utterances of passion (Ibid, p. 101). We have here another reason why the arts would have a low value in a Spinozan education: they will encourage many of those passive affects which are ruled out by Spinoza's philosophy. For Wordsworth, the earliest poets wrote from passion excited by real events. Poetry is competent to express emotions chiefly by its resources of speech and rhythm. The born poet is distinguished from other men by his inheritance of an intense sensibility and susceptibility to passion.

Addison, the literary critic (Ibid, p. 274), says that the poet loses sight of nature and presents persons who have no existence but what he bestows on them. In such poetry we are led into creation. Poetry makes new worlds of its own. Shakespeare's Caliban is cited by Warton (Ibid, p. 275) as a creature of his own imagination in the formation of which he could derive no assistance from experience. In this way one comes closest to God. The romantics think the imagination brings forth a new world, not the world of imitation as adhered to in the classical theories. Poetry represents truth because it invests data with the emotions and because it is sincere. We have the romantic idea of the need to recapture naturalness lost in the exercise of reason (Hampshire 1977, p. 92). Through works of imaginative art, we are brought into contact with a permanent natural order which can't be revealed through reason.

### SPINOZA

The imagination would not be developed in a Spinozan education and we must state why. It gives rise to the defects of fictions and errors (Ch2, p. 48). A fiction of existence is where, say, Paul's essential nature, as far as I know, neither necessitates nor excludes his going home. I can suppose he is doing this and that. It is only because of defects in my knowledge that I can do this, as in reality it is either necessary or impossible that he should have, say, brown hair. So supposals can only occur to a finite mind with limited and defective knowledge. God would not be able to make suppositions. My supposals are limited by what I already know. Thus I can't suppose that an elephant could pass through the eye of a needle. If I say this in a poem, knowing it to be false, then they are nothing but sounds by which I have broken the silence (Joachim 1940, p. 120). If I say the moon is like a Cheshire cat this is not dignified by Spinoza as saying anything.

When scientists formulate hypotheses they are not making supposals, they are stating certain general truths they know to be true and deducing consequences. But if one sets out a conceivable cause then one is entertaining a fiction. Human activity in the aesthetic domain is to be explained in terms of deficiency. Fictions about essences are when we make supposals where the nature of the thing is not understood. The supposition is made with regard to essence, or essence and existence. Examples of the former are an infinite fly or square soul; the latter that trees speak, men can be changed into trees or fountains. Spinoza notes that the more that is known the less room there is for fictions of essence. All of this is distinguished from error in that with a supposal we are not asserting with certainty that trees speak. If, however, we did, then this would be an error and a defect even if it is thought to be imaginative.

According to Spinoza, at the level of the imagination we tend to take in so many experiences that we combine them instead of breaking them up. So we will form more fictions because we combine so many ideas. But, by way of objection, combining is how we create beautiful things. Even so, in my view and Spinoza's, truth has a higher priority than beauty because only truth leads to freedom.

Spinoza provides a more detailed analysis of the content of supposals. It is always complex, consisting of two or more constituent ideas, which owe their unity to psychological association. Their composition is illogical. The supposer is not thinking in any sense at all. The imagination does not follow rational principles. Keats' "Ah, happy, happy boughs!" would be a deficiency, as it exhibits lack of knowledge of the nature of a bough. On Spinoza's view it involves the joining of two ideas by association, as there is no logical connection between boughs and happiness.

Another reason for the deficiency of the imagination is as follows: we passively entertain two or more confused representations of things; we attend to them much as we attend to the images that pass before us in dreams; no thought contributes to their genesis. In TDIEs<sup>57</sup> Spinoza says that fiction does not create anything new. Only such things that already are in the mind are recalled to memory. We have the remembrance of spoken words and of a tree, and when the mind directs itself to them confusedly it forms the notion of a tree speaking. Imagination is not creative. We don't bring into existence something that did not exist before. One is entirely dependent on what comes one's way.

Nothing can happen contrary to the laws of Nature; therefore creation, the making of something unconditionally new without recourse to existing materials, is out of the question. Spinoza denies creativity because everything is determined. We can take this point further on one reading of Spinoza. Leibniz's distinction between the infinite number of possible worlds and the one that is realised explains how the poet can create other species. The poet through the imagination creates new beings (Abrams 1971, p. 277). The poet imitates the powers of nature by transferring the possible into the condition of reality. But, as Matson (1977, pp. 79-80) says, Spinoza supports necessitarianism, the actual world is the only possible world (Appendix, p. 150). From Matson and Bennett (1984, p. 122) we can see why creativity is ruled out in the romantic sense. Imagination has been conceived as a creative power but in Spinoza it is passive (C. Deugd 1966, p. 75).

Also we can't produce ideas which do not belong to a thing. Owing to the correspondence between the attributes of Thought and Extension we can only discover what is already there in reality. We can't create. The kind of freedom envisaged by the romantics through imagination would for Spinoza be no freedom at all, as it is not rooted in a reality that transcends spatio-temporal circumstances. Given the central importance of this, studies which developed the imagination would just be diversions. On the other hand Spinoza does say that people can enjoy the arts, but this is only because man's nature is such that these pleasures must be satisfied. Artistic pursuits, however, would not play a serious part in free people's lives. They would be enjoyable diversions, perhaps like watching a football match, but not an objective of education or a major ingredient of the good-life.

Despite all of this we can find in Spinoza's view of intuition some of what people ascribe to the imagination. We have creativity where we draw out the features of a thing from its Nature. We have the joyful experience of Nature associated with the romantics. For Coleridge imagination is essentially connected with Joy. Without this we merely see (Warnock 1976, p. 78). We have the sense of infinity: the belief that there is more in our experience of the world than can meet the unreflecting eye. There is the sense of oneness with Nature. In the Prelude (Ibid, p. 119) of Wordsworth, the imagination is the name given to the faculty by which we are enabled to understand the significance of the universe: to grasp its life and depth as a felt experience. Poetry represents truth, in that it corresponds to a reality transcending the world of sense. According to Blake (Abrams 1971, p. 313), poetry is the vehicle of Vision. The poet, according to Carlyle, penetrates into the sacred mystery of the Universe revealing the Idea under appearance, the infinite behind the finite, eternity looking through time: an experience which one has at the level of Spinoza's intuition. In both we have the feeling intellect and we move from abstractness to grasp particulars. Romantics, such as Novalis (Deugd 1966, p. 83), called Spinoza the God intoxicated man. Some of them claim to be heirs to Spinoza's thought. Spinoza's account of intuition explains why.

I would suggest that in a Spinozan education some of what is associated with the creative arts will be transmitted, but not the free play of ideas divorced from reality. When Warnock says that artist and spectator have to detach themselves from the world in order to think of certain objects in a new way (1976 p. 197), this could correspond to moving from the common order to viewing things *sub specie aeternitatis*; but this does not combine ideas in a way divorced from reality. The latter may be seen as a freedom to produce an image at will; but as Spinoza showed, this is a false sense of freedom, resting on a belief in free will. True freedom is where the mind follows the order of Nature, which, for some, may not leave sufficient play for the imagination. For Spinoza it is an intuitive knowledge of Nature that takes over some of what people attribute to the imagination. But this does not mean that this will leave these people happy with a Spinozan education, as it will devalue the senses and emotions and not represent the kind of creativity envisaged in the romantics. Moreover the language of rationalism would not substitute for the lyricism of poetry in itself or serve as a vehicle to express one's nature. Spinoza would reject the claim that the arts can give one an insight into the truth. This can only be achieved through rational principles, and the awe of nature derived from this knowledge. Still, in so far as Art does reveal, through imagery, fundamental elements of nature, e. g. in Van Gogh, then it could supplement Rationalist studies. We could introduce people to the energy of nature through a study of Van Gogh. They might then take an interest in this, and want to attain the kind understanding that I outlined in Chapter Three. I am sure that Spinoza's view, which I agree with, is that it is only through reason that these ideas can be adequately understood, and that works of art are no substitute for this understanding.

My overall assessment is that there is some plausibility for Spinoza's low valuation of the imagination and the creative arts. But the reasoning is not conclusive; and I suggest that by devaluing the imagination a Spinozan education could not bring about a complete realisation of human potential. Intellectual discovery can be an escape from impermanence, but so can aesthetic experiences. I conclude that

aesthetic studies should have some place in education, but the main emphasis must be on the kind of freedom analysed in this thesis.

## **6. CRITICAL THINKING**

As I showed in Chapter 3, a Spinozan education will give people a methodology by which they can come to acquire the knowledge that liberates. The views of J. E. McPeck on critical thinking bear some similarities to the approach of Spinoza and many differences. McPeck suggests that rationality is broader than critical thinking (1981, p. 12), the latter being concerned with meta-questions on the relevance of evidence. This would be in line with Spinoza's account of method, where one is not studying the reasons for phenomena but the conditions under which ideas are true. McPeck thinks that critical thinking involves the skill to query the extent to which E provides compelling reasons for P. When one is raising meta-questions on the appropriateness of evidence one is in the sub-domain of critical thinking. This is in the main in accord with Spinoza's approach. The critical thinker will know what constitutes conclusive evidence.

McPeck differs from Spinoza as he limits critical thinking to cases where evidence is problematic. One will respond when confronted with problems. For Spinoza, the student will use the methodology to acquire ideas about nature and not wait for problems to present themselves. In addition, on McPeck's view, and that of most thinkers in this field, the student will direct his thought to empirical beliefs. Critical thinking is seen as a means to help solve problems rather than, as Spinoza shows, an expression of freedom itself.

Critical thinking is widely regarded as a generalised skill that can be applied across subject areas. This would be Spinoza's view of method. Spinoza would consider that his methodology was independent of subject matter and could equally be used to discover the essence of the emotions and of physical objects. Physical science would not have a privileged place in this regard, as the method has an independent status: "The Affects...follow from the same necessity and force of nature as other singular things...they acknowledge certain causes, through which they are understood, and have certain properties, as worthy of our knowledge as the properties of any other thing, by the mere contemplation of which we are pleased...I shall treat the nature and powers of the Affects...by the same Method by which, in the preceding parts, I treated God and the Mind, and I shall consider human actions and appetites as if it were a question of lines, planes and bodies"(E3Pref). But Hampshire (1987, p. 95) states that the question of the conditions under which a proposition is true can only be answered by stating that it depends on the proposition.

McPeck says logic is irrelevant to critical thinking (1981, p. 23). He says that the real problem with uncritical students is not deficiency in a general skill such as logical ability, but a more general lack of education. According to H. Siegel (1988, p. 26), logic can be irrelevant only if logic has nothing to do with reason assessment. But logic is relevant to reason assessment. Even if most reasons are assessed with reference to subject specific principles some are assessed according to subject neutral criteria, e. g. to say that 'murder is wrong because it is wrong to kill people'

begs the question. Here logic is relevant. This would also be Spinoza's view, as skills tracing relations between premises and conclusions can be taught. McPeck challenges this, as the ability to recognise assumptions is not a singular ability. To recognise an assumption in maths requires a different set of abilities than in science. But Logic can reveal faults in inferences that might seem intuitively correct. The inference from 'everybody loves somebody' to 'somebody is loved by everybody' is seen to be fallacious. I consider that it is a fault of our education system that people leave school ignorant of the nature and power of logic. A person who has studied logic will be more rational and he will be less influenced by specious arguments. Now in different subjects there are different kinds of reasons and modes of justifying them. What might be a good reason in one may be a bad reason in another. In deciding an issue it is not the logical validity of an argument that is difficult, but the task of determining if the premises are true. Nevertheless the following example illustrates the importance of logic: 'Regularly taking L. S. D has great adverse physical effects. Since marijuana is a hallucinogen like L. S. D, it too probably produces great adverse physical effects'. This is a bad argument as the only common property is that of being an hallucinogen; and there are relevant dissimilarities. So one would have courses that included epistemology and logic.

Siegel (1988 p. 15) says that students do not apply their critical thinking to their entrenched beliefs. The problem is the assumption that one can teach critical thinking without attention to the problems of self-deception. One must abandon the idea that critical thinking can be taught as a battery of skills independent of commitments. There must be a sensitivity to egocentric and socio-centric components of one's own world view. One must seek out and question one's deepest beliefs and challenge them. One uses the skills on oneself to challenge one's own fundamental beliefs and not just those of one's opponents. This would be in line with the second goal of Spinoza's first part of method (Ch3, p. 76), except that the aim is not just to improve one's empirical beliefs but to sharpen awareness of eternal ideas. Spinoza's account of the conatus implies that critical thinking skills are not enough. One must have the tendency to use them. Siegel (1988, pp. 45-46) has added tendencies to exercise critical thinking. The skills and tendencies conception overcomes the difficulty of a pure skills conception. Being able to assess reasons is necessary but not sufficient. The student must have a character that seeks and bases judgement on reasons, rejects partiality and values intellectual honesty (Ch4, p. 89).

## **7. SCIENCE EDUCATION**

According to Kuhn (1970, p. 23), science education should be geared to the inculcation of the dominant scientific paradigm of the day; the main aim of science education being the production of competent normal scientists. Siegel replies that this is far too narrow, as science education recognises other goals. A science education would improve the paradigm of the day. Certainly in a Spinozan education one would be aiming for more than inculcating the current theory of one's culture. On Kuhn's view the student should not read alternative accounts as this might harm the grasp of the present paradigm. Siegel (1988, Ch6) says scientific knowledge is

fallible. So we need an interchange of ideas. Students should be exposed to different theoretical approaches. They should learn to work with different hypotheses. Scientific pluralism recognises that scientific knowledge is never final or certain but always subject to revision. Conflicts of ideas can stimulate pupils and spur them on to a deeper understanding of issues. Spinoza would agree with Siegel in respect to empirical science; but as we have seen he thought we could obtain eternal truths about nature so that being exposed to different frameworks, given that he thought one was correct, would not be justified.

Siegel sees science as fostering the critical spirit. By fostering features such as objectivity and impartiality it has a major curricular role to play in our overall educational effort. It can encourage open-mindedness. Because of the centrality to science education of these features, science is suited for developing critical thinking. Certainly Spinoza saw the sciences as offering objective definitions of nature. He would agree with Siegel that one could also do philosophy of science, studying the relation between evidence and theory. Studying the difference between science and pseudo-science may deepen pupils' understanding of important features of science, e. g. evidence. The contrast between science and pseudo science may foster critical thinking by highlighting the role of reasons. By looking at inadequate theories one strengthens one's grasp of the reasons why adequate theories are the way they are, and appreciates the force of reasons (Ch3, p. 76). The main difference between Spinoza's account and Siegel's, together with most conceptions of science education, is that Spinoza sees it as the necessary vehicle for transcendence of space and time.

## **8. A SPINOZAN EDUCATION**

### **THE FREE PERSON**

A product of a Spinozan education will lead the following life: he will place an understanding of himself and Nature at the forefront of his concerns, and from this understanding he will experience the greatest joy. Through this he will attain a character which rises beyond his formerly encultured self. He will understand Nature and himself *sub specie aeternitatis*, and his focus of study will be Metaphysics, Logic, Mathematics and Physics. He will also study Psychology as part of his drive to know himself. The world will be viewed as a synthesis of a mechanistic and organic structure. He will understand his identity as part of Nature, and this knowledge will be a lived experience. He will feel the fundamental processes of Nature running through him. He will be self-reliant as he forms his states for himself, using the methods discussed in this thesis. In this, and in the pursuit of knowledge, the free person will display verve and activity in vigorously striving towards ever-increasing transcendence. He will pursue his needs modestly and according to prudential principles. The free man will be detached in his personal relations, dealing with incidents such as the death of relatives in a calm, efficient manner. He will have the following self-regarding character traits: he will be independent of the opinions of others, unlike the unfree man who will toady to his peers. But he may appear arrogant, as he will not be interested in the opinions of those who are unfree. He will have strong convictions, as his beliefs will be grounded in first principles. He will

only influence people in the right directions, unlike the unfree person who will seek to corrupt people as he has been corrupted, although he does not realise this as he is ignorant of the true good. He will pursue things in moderation and understand what he is really like, unlike the unfree person who tends towards excesses and is not in touch with himself. The free man will not be given to hope or fright, will be able to deal with danger and will not fear death. The Spinozan educated person will engage in activities which give him hedonistic pleasure, as asceticism is not in accord with his nature, but these pursuits will play a very limited role in his life. He will not be devoted to finite things such as money and pets, etc. Artistic pursuits would be diversions having no more gravitas than a game of cards. Such are the universal traits which embody freedom from the common order.

The free person would be mainly concerned with his own development, and whilst he would not harm them, he would not sacrifice his own development to protect and promote others. Despite Spinoza's strictures on morality, he will not expend too much energy helping others although he will not harm others. Given the *conatus*, just as the former can't be ruled in, perhaps the latter can't be ruled out. But given the devotion to knowledge there should be no reason to harm others, unless they constitute a threat to one's well being. The free person will be honest, repay hatred with love, and avoid favours; when he does on occasions socialise he will mix with free people, have a true conception of others' nature, not be envious, nor subject to pity, anger, vengeance and hatred. He will tend to mix with those of like-minded disposition, but mainly in order to exchange ideas, as personal friendships will not be his prime concern. He will experience very little emotion except with regard to his central pursuit, and may be perceived as cold.

One can't help coming to the conclusion that the Spinozan man is an academic with the appropriate Spinozan character traits. Yet those who have to live in the common order, working in banks and supermarkets, can experience glimpses of the eternal in their lives if they are able to attain some knowledge of nature. Yet we must question how many will be capable of this at all. But Spinoza has shown that there are degrees of freedom; and people may be able to achieve some tranquillity in their personal relations, even if their ability to attain the kind of knowledge needed for full freedom is inherently limited. Also their work experience may tend to make them interested in less weighty matters. One could conjecture that a solitary occupation, like Spinoza's own, would be more consonant with a Spinozan education. One is developing people who are able to experience nature *sub specie aeternitatis*. They will see the world in abstraction from the personal view. The perspective delineated by Churchland (Ch3, p. 64) gives an insight into this type of experience. In their personal lives they will limit their interactions in the common order, and will not be emotionally affected by its turbulence, as the path of wisdom will lead up through stages of increasing detachment from the common order to a point where the person has fashioned himself into a being *sub specie aeternitatis*. P. Wienpahl (1979, p. 46) represents Spinoza as a person whose ideas are relevant to spatio-temporal matters and as a thinker whose ultimate concern is transcendence. The problem with this even-handed approach is that it underrates the resistance encountered by any claim to reconcile the claims of the view from nowhere with those of a worldly outlook. Spinoza's philosophy exhibits a tension between absolute and relative freedom. In E4p62s Spinoza writes that the judgement we make about events in time is imaginary



rather than real. This could be read as saying that metaphysical matters will have no bearing on ordinary concerns. It implies a change in the curriculum away from empirical matters and may be considered to divorce pupils from the common order in which they live. Spinoza would not encourage much experimental work in physics or studying economics. Even in the area of ecology the focus will be on eternal principles. Studying the effects of pollution on the rain forests would be within what he calls the common order. He says "we can have only inadequate knowledge of the duration of things" (E4p62s). The more the curriculum is given over to empirical studies the less will it be educating for freedom. In general, experimental work will be adopted to illustrate one's studies on the essence of things (Ch3, p.72). But we will not neglect empirical studies as we live in the common order and people will need some empirical knowledge: to remain healthy we will need some dietary knowledge.

The cosmic point of view is irrelevant to the choices one makes, e.g. between eating strawberry or vanilla ice cream. Such an education will not enable pupils to make choices in the area of consumerism, as any such focus could encourage an over-concern to make money, which would be a passive affect. Spinoza would probably advocate learning enough to survive, but what does 'survive' mean here? We may be required to throw ourselves into our career with enthusiasm, but this will leave one little time for studying nature, and to accept the latter may entail that the free man finds himself unemployed. In a complex society one will need to learn a great deal about pension arrangements and career prospects, otherwise one could be vulnerable to exploitation by others. Not to do so would diminish one's freedom in the sense outlined by White and by Spinoza as freedom of control. Yet too much involvement in this will diminish one's chance to learn more about nature and attain true transcendence. It is clear that it is the latter which will have precedence for Spinoza; but it makes his aim difficult to achieve given the information people need to have in a modern economy.

Also one who adopts the cosmic point of view regards the test for value as whether a rational being possessed only of cognitive powers would choose x over alternatives. But the relevant question is whether a rational being possessing particular desires and needs would choose x compared to y. It is irrational to thwart our needs. The basis from which we make rational evaluations is the individual and his goals. This certainly supports White's conception, yet the current education system fails to develop freedom because of its exclusive concentration on choice within the goals set by society. Spinoza does not neglect the claims of human needs. The charge against him is that he places less emphasis on them than others would consider justified.

Another problem with taking the objective view is as follows: to see oneself from the objective stand-point is to realise that one's connection with the identifiable me is arbitrary. Taking up the impersonal standpoint produces a detachment from myself. There seems no room for Mr X with his particular point of view. Pupils will come to see their personalities as having no connection with their real self. The same person who is subjectively committed to a personal life in all its detail finds himself in another aspect detached. But this is not the point of view of the true self, which has no point of view and includes in its conception myself and its perspectives. Nothing essential about me has to do with my perspectives and position in the world (Ch5, p. 140). I abstract the objective self from myself, by treating the experiences of that

person as data for the construction of an objective picture. I interact with the spatio-temporal order and must ask what the world must be like from no point of view in order for things to appear to me as they do. At the first stage there is a close connection between objectivity and inter-subjectivity, as I have a conception which other humans can share. But it also requires that we find within ourselves the capacity to view ourselves in abstraction from any perspective. But the objective self is only part of the point of view of the person. It then seems amazing that I am attached to any point of view. This would be a radical dissociation which could be traumatic. The world described by this objective conception is centreless and featureless. The problem is that our personal perspective on things seems to be as much a part of nature as the objective conception. An objective conception of the taste of tomatoes in terms of motion of particles would leave out part of its reality, i. e. its taste. It is my view that we must guard against such alienation in pursuing the view from nowhere.

In seeing ourselves from the outside we find it difficult to take our lives seriously. There is a point of view from which it does not matter that we get sacked, or lose our savings on a timeshare in Spain. Within the context of nature as a whole these events are not important. But this could produce a dangerous divorce from the common order and leave one prey to others. To survive in society we must know its customs, as those who get long sentences for drinking alcohol in Saudi Arabia are well aware. The tendencies in Spinoza towards a Buddhist retreat are offset by the drive to preserve one's being, and this involves remaining alive and healthy. But the two views are never reconciled. Spinoza does say that the free man does not think of death. This could be taken to mean that he is indifferent to it from the impersonal view. But Spinoza means that people should not pursue a knowledge of nature out of fear.

We will lose the situatedness of experience. Reality is not just objective reality and any objective conception must include an acknowledgement of its own incompleteness. The character of each of the experiential perspectives can be understood only from within. Williams (1978, p. 245) says that any valid absolute conception must explain how we come to our perspectives. Science can explain what colours are associated with light reflective propensities. But this is not an explanation of what colour is. Replacing descriptions in terms of colour by spectral reflection curves is a different description for different purposes. Spinoza does say, "For example, if the motion the nerves receive from the objects presented through the eyes is conducive to health, the objects by which it is caused are called beautiful. . . those which move the sense through the nose, they call pleasant-smelling...all the notions by which ordinary people are accustomed to explain nature are only modes of imagining, and do not indicate the nature of anything, only the constitution of the imagination" (E1App). On the other hand, Spinoza does not think perspective will be eliminated. Speaking about our perception of the sun he says that even when we know its true distance we imagine it as near (E2p35). Spinoza does say that the imagination is a virtue (E2p35), and it may appear that viewing nature from the standpoint of the imagination will be respected. But this is only because it will enable us to know how the exchanges of energy between ourselves and nature manifest themselves in these effects (Ch3, p. 64).

It will take imagination in a sense different from that used by Spinoza to appreciate how things feel to other people. In so far as the objective view diminishes this capacity it will detach us from a true understanding of reality. Pupils will be less capable of imagining how other people experience the world. Another type of transcendence is where one enters into the subjective points of view of others. It is difficult to understand what could be meant by the objective character of an experience apart from the place from which the subject apprehends it. I have shown that it may not be inconsistent with Spinoza's philosophy to enter into the thoughts of others (Ch4, p. 110). Yet this human perspective will be treated less seriously than the objective view. Studies in History, Social Anthropology, Comparative Religions would be of no importance in this regard, as they would just inform one of the different perspectives of people, but not of reality itself. A Spinozan education would not develop the capacity to see things from another person's point of view, as the free man will spend his time understanding nature *sub specie aeternitatis*. Even so, some study of history will be useful in giving us data through which we can see the operation of eternal laws; and if people are to overcome some passive affects then some knowledge of their historical roots may be useful, e.g. in the case of racial prejudice.

Temporal pursuits will only play a limited role in one's life: "It is part of a wise man, I say, to refresh and restore himself in moderation with pleasant food and drink, with scents, with the beauty of green plants, with decoration, music, sports, the theatre. . . so that the Mind also may be equally capable of understanding many things" (E4p45s). This passage can be taken to show that one will spend time in pursuits not devoted to the pursuit of freedom of mind. On the other hand, it could also be argued that the last few words indicate that the purpose of doing so may be to put one in touch with the forces of nature, as explained above when I referred to Churchland (Ch3, p. 64). Spinoza would not encourage activities which involved an immersion in the first stage of knowledge. Gardening, which, for some, gives experience of nature's beauty, would only be a minor pastime for Spinoza. Music would also fall in this category.

For those who value listening to music and seeing works of art, a Spinozan education would be an impoverished one. With a scientific theory we can think of objectivity in terms of correspondence between it and existing reality. With Art an element of subjectivity is always introduced. What becomes established is what individuals find themselves responding to rather than what is proved objectively. One can view some artistic work in the spirit of scientific detachment, abstracting from any engagement with its human meaning and felt significance. We can assess a sculpture as pure form etc. and refuse to value any features which link it to us *qua* humans. In music we could just attend to the mathematical harmonies in a Beethoven sonata. But as is clear from my discussion of Warnock, an education which encouraged this way of viewing art would be condemned by many. In so far as we are to be at home in our world we need to find our feelings enhanced in it, and one way is through immersion in works of Art, where the world is seen and moulded in terms of human experience. Naess (1990 p. 53) cites the novelist Alnaes who shows that objective processes can excite the emotions. Spinoza's account of the love of God shows he would agree with this. However this experience would not be the same as responding to a painting with our senses; and a serious objection could be made to a Spinozan education in so far

as it may devalue studies rooted in the imagination. Spinoza may also be said to underrate the role the imagination can play in forming ideas, as when a scientist can discover a new theory through imaginative insight, although this role may be taken by intuition.

Also we can question the liveability of a conception of the world where the experience of the passing of time is seen as inherently perspectival, as the transition from past to present and future is one of our basic forms of experience.

### MORALITY

From the theory of the conatus we have seen that a Spinozan education will encourage people to favour their own development. However it has also been shown that a Spinozan education could develop a concern to promote the maximum good irrespective of whose it is. I will consider if this latter implication is one that should be pursued.

There are limits that derive from personal projects. This would be a limitation on ascending to an objective view via morality; or via abstracting from my particular concerns. We can question an education that developed the impersonal view in either area to the exclusion of all else. There is no necessity to abandon all values that do not correspond to anything desirable from an impersonal standpoint. Though some human interests give rise to impersonal values, not all do. If I have reason to play chess, others do not have a reason to care about this in the way they do if I have reason to avoid pain. Most things have value because of our projects; so they are not values for anyone as others might not share them. Their value is not impersonally detachable as they can't be subsumed under a more universal value like pleasure (Nagel 1986, p. 167).

Sometimes consequentialists say that concern with one's own projects will in most circumstances have the best effect overall, as one is in a better position to promote one's own good. So the agent produces maximum good by concentrating on himself. But an agent-centred approach would deny one needs to show this. Spinoza does not justify the promotion of one's own being by trying to show it is for the overall good. An agent-centred prerogative would allow each agent to devote time to their projects out of proportion to the weight from an impersonal point of view. This would be the implication of the conatus. There is more to us than morality.

An assumption is that the only real values are impersonal. Someone can have a reason only if there is an agent-neutral reason for it to happen. But each of us is not only an objective self but a person with a particular perspective. A strongly impersonal morality can be a threat to the kind of life many of us take to be desirable. Williams (Smart and Williams 1973, p. 116) says that impersonal demands rule out the commitment to personal projects that is a condition for integrity in one's life. The cost in terms of alienation from one's life is too high. We care about our projects out of proportion to the weight carried in a calculus of values *sub specie aeternitatis*. We become identified with our projects, which define our life. It is absurd to say that we should just step aside from them and decide from the

impersonal view. It makes us into a channel between the input of everyone's projects, and an optimistic output. But this is to neglect our attitudes and projects which constitute our identity. Another problem is that once one attains the view from nowhere, then moral concerns may evaporate, as from this perspective people's concerns are detached from what they really are, so that it does not matter if people can't attain their ends. And yet Spinoza's thought may not imply this, as *sub specie aeternitatis* all are striving to preserve their being: so it does matter that they attain their ends, so long as these are ends pertaining to them *qua* human beings. Even without the pressure from moral concerns, personal projects such as fishing, would be given less importance in a Spinozan education, concerned as it is with the eternal life.

### MORAL EDUCATION

A Spinozan moral education would be one of enlightened egoism, although there are grounds for saying that the free person will extend help to others and be concerned to protect all beings for altruistic motives. Many moral principles that people would find acceptable will be transmitted, e.g. avoiding fraud. Actions will be assessed in terms of their consequences for the development of freedom. However, moral concepts that are dependent on free-will will not be developed. The Spinozan free man will have no sense of moral duty and no conscience, as he fails to feel repentance or remorse for anything he has done. Evil is want of knowledge and can be corrected by reasoning, as bad will is not the issue, although we have shown that Spinoza would accept that it is very difficult to overcome the passive emotions. We will not see people as evil in being guided by the intention to do harm, but just ignorant of the means to their welfare; people can only do what they believe is good. This education would not encourage the emotion of sympathy. Much of this will not be acceptable as a moral education but it follows from the tenets of Spinozism.

### EMOTIONS AND DESIRES

A further limitation of the impersonal view is that it would neglect personal feelings. It has been argued by Strawson that a life without the reactive feelings would be impoverished. But if one considers that freedom is the highest good then any responses that manifest a lack of freedom will be undesirable. Being prone to the reactive attitudes means that one's well-being will always be at the mercy of whatever events occur.

Secondly, as Spinoza considers that knowledge of nature is the highest good, it could be said that reactive attitudes are undesirable, as they involve an error if determinism is true. In addition, the reactive attitudes can be distracting. A person may be so overcome with resentment that he cannot concentrate on things that might be beneficial to him. Also energy is diverted into this resentment which could be used for more worthwhile aims. In support of Spinoza's position one could say that concentration on interpersonal relationships has led to the failure to consider other ways of personal fulfilment. The taking of oneself as connected to nature can be a source of celebration. I can through my membership in nature escape an isolation. I identify with the greatest realities.

On the other hand one could say the following: the passions can be seen as important in motivating people; a model of rationality which suppressed these elements would reduce well-being; emotions can propel us to more appropriate objects and play a constructive role in moral motivation. One can question whether this could survive if, as Spinoza advocates, the other affects were to decay. We would not be able to perceive ethically relevant items without the passions. A person who deliberated with all the superiority of an acute intelligence but did not allow himself to respond to his surroundings through the passions would be deprived. To have nothing of the love of others, to get no esteem, is to have a poor time. I suggest that to have a life in which feelings, and one's pride in having the good opinion of others, were removed would be to exist in less than a human way. It strikes one as unsatisfactory that one should be short of rage and resentment. Do we wish not to have resentful feelings when others go back on their loyalties? There is something in proper indignation and decent rage.

For Spinoza, in so far as we follow the dictates of reason we must not blame people. By seeing events as determined the wise man frees himself from all passions and ceases to despise anyone. On the other hand, I suggest that in some cases this attitude will not be appropriate for us, as human beings, as when hearing of the events of the Holocaust. Nevertheless, we can see that human life would be improved in many cases if we could stand back and view things as occurring with necessity. As Sprigge (1988b, p. 7) says, if people in Northern Ireland or the Middle East could grasp how others are bound to act, then their anger would be assuaged.

Detachment is also a quiet distancing of oneself from everyday life, a refusal to become embroiled in social relationships. This education would discourage pupils from spending too much time on interpersonal relations and discussing everyday matters such as relations with boy friends or difficulties at work. Instead pupils would be encouraged to remain aloof from these matters, as far as was consistent with their self-preservation, and not to get worried with setbacks and indeed not to see them as setbacks. This approach to education would contrast sharply with current educational practice where too much emphasis is placed on the ephemeral, where pupils are not encouraged to distance themselves from particular happenings, where their anxieties about particular events are taken too seriously, thus encouraging them to see the local and the ephemeral as worthy of consideration. Very often schools fail to get at the root of personal problems. Pupils may have anxieties because they are too concerned about status, money, other people's opinions. An education on Spinoza's model will teach pupils not to be concerned about these things, and thus particular hatreds, etc. will be overcome. Schools may be concerned to enable a pupil not to feel rage over a particular event, but by encouraging a concern for the temporal they will never succeed in any wholesale transformation of pupils' attitudes. All this can be said for a Spinozan education.

But man is not a totally rational creature living continuously *sub specie aeternitatis*. We seek love and friendship when from the point of view of a self-sufficient being these may seem weaknesses, as they make us vulnerable to reversals. Yet I contend that they are so endemic to our nature that to avoid being subject to them would deny a basic human need and could create psychological problems for oneself. One

can't love people without emotionally depending on them, as this would not count as love. Love and friendship are concerns to us as finite beings. We may not share in the aversion to risk and vulnerability that marks the state of the free being. Would such a being be better off than us, having not experienced the appetites, love and friendship? A Spinozan education will value them, but we may question how seriously. The *conatus* certainly pulls the educator to this but the claims of freedom pull the other way. One suspects that Spinoza thought that it would be better if we could be completely free, even though his concepts of good and bad forbid him to recommend a life one cannot adopt.

Another objection is that a Spinozan education would destroy individuality, as all free people will have the same affects and cognitions. This is not correct. Firstly, in so far as one person differs from another in that he is spiteful or envious, Spinoza would rightly claim that such diversity of itself is not virtuous. There are differences between unfree people, but given the value of freedom these are no more valuable than diseases. He talks of a Spanish poet who has been seized with a certain sickness and could easily be mistaken for a grown up child (E4p39s). He also says that "...Greed, Ambition, and Lust really are species of madness, even though they are not numbered among diseases" (E4p44). We do not value the individuality of the kleptomaniac. It is a condition that we think should be treated; but love of status, fame, consumer goods – these are all ways in which in our culture we can define ourselves. The value of a Spinozan education would be to see that these differences are not the ones worth developing, any more than it is worth educating people to become schizophrenics. But how can the free man be an individual? Rational people will be different as they are placed in different situations, and will have to make different responses to other rational people in other situations (Saw 1972, p. 154). This is true where we refer to relative freedom; but how can one free man, in the absolute sense, differ from another, as the adequate ideas in both are the same? Hampshire (1987, p. 132) says that when one attains adequate ideas one's individuality disappears. M. Kneale (1979, p. 239) provides a solution: a human mind is that system of knowledge which has the common notions as its first premise, the existence of other parts of the universe as intermediate premises and the existence of its own body as a conclusion. As I showed (Ch3, p. 67, Ch4, p. 83), our nature reflects the whole and the whole bears the imprint of our nature. To understand oneself through the whole is to achieve a different integration from that achieved by someone else understanding themselves and ourselves as part of the whole. One may be helped to grasp this difficult point in the following way: if the heart could understand how it follows from Nature as a whole, it would still be distinct from the liver if it could understand how the heart reciprocates with the whole. According to Hallett (1930, pp. 203-204), in a self-reflective unity the parts reflect the whole and the whole is constituted by these infinite reflections of itself: "Nevertheless, in God there is necessarily an idea that expresses the essence of this or that human Body, under a species of eternity" (E5p22).

### COMMUNITY

It will be said Spinoza's view misunderstands the social nature of man, the fact that we are conditioned beings and there is no transcendent I standing outside experience. For instance, C. Taylor does not think that community norms are immune to criticism. But this is not a process of assessing norms by some standard external to them. It is a process of clarifying relations among the beliefs. It requires immersion in and sensitive attention to the detail of community (Taylor 1991, p. 40). Similarly Benn (1975) does not think one can transcend one's socialisation. The ideas one uses to question traditions are taken from one's culture. The self is embedded or situated in existing social practices. We can't stand back and opt out of them. A. MacIntyre (1982, p. 175) says that self-determination has to be exercised within these social roles rather than standing outside them. If MacIntyre's theory were true then there would be everything to be said for initiating children into practices and getting them to see that their own good is inextricable from the good of others. On the communitarian view, true freedom must be situated. We must accept the goal our situation sets for us. What is good for a person is what is good for one who inhabits the roles of son or father, etc. The self has to find its identity in and through its membership in communities such as the family. To imagine a person without constitutive attachments is to imagine some one without character. Our experience is what it is by the way we interpret it and this has all to do with the norms of our culture. Most of our experiences would be impossible outside of society. That set of practices which make up the public life of the community express norms most central to its members' identity. They are only sustained in their identity by their participation in these practices.

G. Dworkin (1988, p. 23) says that the liberal view is inconsistent with other values such as accepting that one's actions and desires are determined by the needs of others and by loyalty. According to R. T. Allen (1982, p. 203), if all were to choose their roles in life there would be no social order. If all were to depend on individual will and not on historic communities then no agreement can have binding force. It might be a disaster if everyone was encouraged to choose, freely working out principles for themselves without the proper disciplines. We can't regard ourselves as independent without cost to those loyalties whose moral force consists in the fact that living by them is inseparable from understanding ourselves as particular members of the family or community. According to M. Sandel (1982, pp. 55-59), the self is constituted by its ends which we discover by virtue of being embedded in some shared social context. To imagine a person incapable of constitutive attachments is not to conceive a free agent but to have one without character. To have a character is to know that I move in history. I can reflect on my history and distance myself from it but the point of reflection is not outside history.

Against the communitarian view, I agree with Spinoza that society is compounded of individuals. Such agents would collaborate for gain. Collaboration does not depend on the parties valuing collaboration for intrinsic reasons, but only for what each can get out of it: "Man...can wish for nothing more helpful to the preservation of his being than that...the Minds and Bodies of all should compose, as it were, one Mind and Body; that all should strive together...to persevere their being; and...seek for themselves the common advantage of all"(E4p18s).



In my view, Sandel is wrong, as the self-discovery he refers to can't replace judgement on how to lead our lives. We are not trapped by our attachments, incapable of judging the worth of the goals we inherited. We can question a social practice. Spinoza, rightly, considers that social values and ends do not define my true identity; I am distinct from them. I am sure that one way to enslave ourselves is to think of ourselves as embodying a role and thus behave accordingly. What we need is an Archimedean point from which to assess the basic structure of society. This holds out a liberating vision. We are free to discover principles unconstrained by an order of value antecedently given. Individuals are free to question their participation in existing social practices, and to opt out of them should they no longer want to pursue them. Individuals are not defined by their membership in any particular economic or religious group. I agree with Gellner (1992, p. 49) that if all standards are an expression of culture no sense can be ascribed to criticising cultures. No standards could exist in terms of which this could be done.

### CONCLUSION

When we urge people to be objective we are recommending that they try not to be influenced by accidents of their situation. The worth of an argument is independent of the person. The fact that one view is my view does not make it superior; if it is superior this will be a function of the evidence. If I participate in a rational discussion I must detach myself from my own ideas enough to view them impartially. Objectivity requires we be aware of irrelevant factors which might influence us. It will also require conforming to public criteria for the evaluation of propositions. It will require us to overcome prejudice.

Prudence requires that we do not automatically give priority to present desires but that we overcome this influence by detaching ourselves from what we feel at the moment. In the case of sorrow we are urged to take the longer view of things, as in the broader perspective the losses we incurred may not be so serious. That people often do respond to whatever stimulus is strongest and most immediate would be taken by educators as a condition to be overcome. All this can be said for developing the objective view. It is implied by Spinoza's thought, but so far we are referring to improvements within the level of the imagination. On the other hand, the cosmic extension of this has many problems, as we have seen. A Spinozan education could be seen as a liberation from human life. This may appear a high price to pay for liberation from the personal perspective. One will not develop the imagination and the creative arts will stultify. One will have little concern for finite things and will cease to feel resentment, anger, etc. This would appear to be an education for deprivation not liberation. Of course, Spinoza does say that moderate enjoyment of the theatre etc. is consistent with his philosophy. Within his philosophy there is a combination of the two perspectives: the human one and the one *sub specie aeternitatis*. But it is the latter which will be given priority.

One solution that might be suggested is to withdraw from the specifics of human life as much as possible: minimise one's contact with the world, abandon personal ties. This would be a form of Buddhist retreat, making a Spinozan education similar to a

monastic one, albeit with a naturalistic re-definition of God. But in my view, this is too high a price to pay and would not be consistent with his thought.

Another response might be that, if we can't retain the subjective view within an objective conception, we should forget the ambition to achieve objectivity. But, in my view, even if an objective understanding can be only partial it is worth trying to expand it, as it is the only way to be truly free. I have shown in the previous four chapters how a knowledge of Nature will attain man's highest good of freedom. We cannot forgo this aim simply because of the problems we have as finite beings in realising it. Our current education system and recent philosophy of education, resolves this by ignoring the objective view altogether. The lesson from Spinoza's philosophy is that this diminishes people's lives.

Another solution that might be suggested (Naess 1989, p. 55) is to see subjective/objective difference in relational terms. To some people a garden is full of colours; to a scientist it is replete with wavelengths. There are different ways of relating to nature, one being no more objective than another. But the message from Spinoza is that the view from nowhere is the one that depicts nature and other views have not the same status. Given the aim of freedom then we know which one must be developed.

A possible compromise, which I accept, would be as follows: we can't get rid of our capacity for taking an external view, but it does not require reflection on the cosmic arbitrariness of eating hamburgers. So we can live in the common order. We can see the world from a human perspective, whilst recognising that it is only a human one. We can have some affections for others but we must avoid the excesses of envy, pride and vanity. There is an attitude which cuts through the opposition between transcendent universality and self-absorption. We must resist the tendency to overvalue the present and avoid excesses. I think that this view is the one that Spinoza is supporting. But in the last part of Ethics 5 he does seem to emphasise the eternal life at the complete expense of the temporal. I agree with Nagel that the objective standpoint gives us more than we can take on in real life. On the other hand, it is my view that not to take it on at all would be to frustrate one's essence as a free being and would deprive people of that experience of themselves, as eternal in the midst of duration, which has been detailed in this thesis. All of this shows the tension I spoke of between absolute and relative freedom. The current education system ignores the eternal altogether and its promotion of relative freedom is impoverished as it is not integrated into transcendent principles.

Spinoza's vision of freedom, presented in this thesis, offers an education which is more relevant to us than the current system and current philosophies of education. It is impossible to present a detailed diary in the life of the free man which will state exactly how much time he will spend in dealing with matters in the common order. This will depend on circumstances: the free man in a country ravaged by civil war will have to spend more time on his own survival than one in a peaceful society. In the latter case, the free man will have more time and resources to attain the kind of full freedom detailed in this thesis. My contention is that we must re-orientate our lives much more towards the attainment of the kind of freedom through knowing Nature that has been argued for in this thesis.

We should teach what we believe to be true. Yet, as Spinoza enables us to see, we are not actually teaching what is true. Also what we do teach carries assumptions about natural causation and law, and about how we prove propositions, which do not themselves form the content of education. A Spinozan education, by incorporating these elements into its content, would militate against sloppy thinking. We would learn to be rigorous, establishing coherence in our thoughts. If we accept determinism then Spinoza's conclusions on the imagination and on interpersonal relations will follow. If we recoil from this then we must re-examine our beliefs about determinism. If we come to doubt it then what does this do to our belief in being able to explain events?

Too much of education involves a smörgåsbord approach: Let's have some creativity, a certain amount of science, much altruism, a dose of critical thinking. Let's change hatreds, but perhaps a little resentment here and there may not be a bad thing. Don't forget a large quantity of vocational education. People select what they like from within Spinoza's first stage of knowledge. All will not agree with Spinoza's conclusions but, contrary to Bennett's view of Spinoza's powers of reasoning (1984, p. 328), they can learn from the rigour of his analysis.

Above all what we learn from Spinoza is that there is a better life in the achievement of transcendence, in absolute terms where we attain states undisturbed by the common order, and in relative terms where we integrate the common order into eternal principles of thought and behaviour. In knowing Nature we have an object which is intrinsically inspiring, and one loses the sense of being confined within one's environment, more or less helplessly reacting to it. We have a sense of power and escape from triviality when our thought moves into this larger element, which is the rational order of things as revealed in physics and maths and philosophy (Hampshire 1977, p. 77). We can turn to Peters (1973 pp. 112-113) for an account of this: the individual can become obsessed with some new possessions, upset by some petty slight, he may fail to ask himself what this adds to the attainment of life. Instead of this we can connect activities in the common order with a general view of the world which would invest them with a very different type of significance. This would affect our manner of acting.

In our own society there are some persons who have developed a deeper dimension in their consciousness, which transforms their mundane experiences. These are persons who hold certain sorts of religious beliefs. But, as liberal philosophers of education have commonly recognised, there are too many problems about the truth claims of religious beliefs for the promotion of such beliefs to be an acceptable aim of education. In contrast, in a Spinozan education, there would also be a transformation of mundane experience, but it would be achieved through a knowledge of Nature. This is a possible and acceptable aim for education, although some will get further towards the realisation of the aim than others.

To the extent that the transformation in question is achieved, we would move in the common order guided by an Archimedean point outside of it which invests our lives with the stillness of eternity, experiencing infinity in the midst of finitude. This would be the achievement of a Spinozan education.

## APPENDIX

### 1. CONATUS

*(Ch1, p. 10) (Ch1, p. 36)*

I will consider first the proof of the conatus as set out by Bennett (1984, pp. 234-246). Spinoza reaches the conclusion that each thing tries as hard as it can to stay in existence(E3p6) from the statement that nothing can destroy itself without outside help(E3p4):

Premise A "...No thing has anything in itself by which it can be destroyed..." (E3p6Dem);

Premise B "On the contrary, it is opposed to everything which can take its existence away (Ibid)";

Conclusion "Each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to persevere in its being"(E3p6).

I will start with premise A. Spinoza considers this to be identical to "no thing can be destroyed except through an external cause"(E3p4). His proof of A is: "The definition of any thing affirms, and does not deny, the thing's essence..."(E3p4dem). If a horse qua horse could become a man, then in identifying x as a horse, one would have to say it was not a horse. If x is constituted by a particular form it cannot have a different form. So if x kills itself, it must be accidental features of x that are responsible; x considered in itself can't destroy itself.

Suicidal acts raise problems with A. These are discussed in E4p20. The first way is not suicide at all: another person "...Twists his right hand...and forces him to direct the sword against his heart". This is consistent with A. The second way is when one kills oneself to avoid a greater evil. This is only consistent with A, if this motivating desire is not part of one's nature. It would seem that Spinoza would say that any such desire that produces self destruction can't be part of one's nature, in which case no counterexample to A is possible. A third example is where x kills himself because he becomes a different person. This raises problems. Prior to the killing, Paul became Peter and Peter did the killing, or if it was still Paul then we have a contradiction to A. Despite these difficulties, I think that Spinoza's proof can be said to have some force.

I will now consider B. Spinoza derives B from A through premise A1: "Things are of contrary nature, i. e., cannot be in the same subject, in so far as one can destroy the other"(E3p5). A1 does follow from A. If something is to destroy x, it must be different to x's essence. Spinoza's move from A1 to B is incorrect. He assumes that something different to something else must be opposed to it. Spinoza identifies these two meanings of 'contrary' in E3p6dem. Why is this? In A1 he identifies 'contrary' with 'cannot exist in the same object'. But if x could destroy us, it could still coexist with us as part of a wider whole. So x can coexist with what is contrary to it, and may not be opposed to it. Now from the fact that y could destroy x, they can't instantiate the same nature but they could be parts of a larger thing z. Z could destroy a part of itself, i. e. x. Spinoza has been encouraged to this because he has taken it that what destroys x can't be instantiated by x, so x must be opposed to it; but this does not imply that x will be opposed to non x that is part of another individual. Spinoza seeks to establish B through A and A1 but fails.

According to Bennett, we could try and rescue Spinoza's attempt this way: Spinoza is assuming that if y could destroy x then they must be kept at a distance, since if they came too close they would threaten to unite within a single individual which would be self-destructible. X could be depended on to keep y at a safe distance and x would do whatever would reduce the threat from y. Relating this to the matter at hand, if we take it that one's nature is to be independent, one will strike out at anything that makes one dependent, so one will overcome passive states and attain a character that is firm and can resist being overcome. If something threatens to change the essence of x then, as the existing essence and the new one can't instantiate x, that threat will be resisted. But this conatus is not just a conservative force it is also expansionary. Perhaps all that Spinoza can establish is that at the point where one essence is to occupy another it will be resisted. Bennett thinks that the most we can squeeze from Spinoza's proof is that if we do something this will promote our being. Martineau(1886, p. 339) sums this up: "It is not content with offering a dead weight against non existence. It keeps at a distance whatever would reduce and selects and appropriates whatever may increase the scope of the nature which it guards". According to premise A, if x does f then doing f

can't destroy x considered from its nature alone. But this is not what Spinoza tries to prove. Spinoza is not just saying that if x does something it will not be self-destructive. He is saying that x will positively seek out what enhances its being. Thus from A one can't derive the more expansionary interpretation of the conatus. According to Donagan(1988. p.149), in E3p4d four steps can be distinguished: (1) a non external cause follows from the things essence; (2) a thing's essence expresses what causes it to be not what causes it not to be; (3) if its essence entailed its destruction it would cause itself not to be; (4) therefore a self destructive thing must be self contradictory. But Donagan shows (4) does not follow, as the transient causation by which things are destroyed is temporal. A definition can lay down causal conditions that are lawfully sufficient both for the existence of x for a period and its non existence after the period. Now step 2 of his proof of E3p4 is that a thing's definition lays down what conditions its parts and their arrangement must satisfy if it is to exist. Step 3 would lay down that if its destruction followed its essence its definition would lay down conditions that would ensure it ceases to exist. So 'no thing can be destroyed except by external cause' means self destruction can't be among the functions by which a body is defined. As a general principle E3p4 is false. According to Curley (1988, pp. 109-112), Spinoza derives the conclusion direct from premise A: if we imagine that a thing could destroy itself then this would contradict premise A which asserts that if a thing is destroyed it must be by an external cause. The problem here is that it throws all the weight of the proof of the conatus on premise A and it is not clear that it can bear this weight.

Another proof of the conatus is: All things are conceived through God and God's power is identical with his essence. So: "Whatever exists expresses the nature, or essence of God in a certain and determinate way"(E1p36Dem).

Another proof is as follows: According to F. Pollock (1880, p. 219) "We shall find that persistence for an appreciable time. . . against appreciable external force is the test applied by the unconscious philosophising of language". What makes an aggregate a thing, is persistence in being. Water in a glass is not a thing as its shape is due to the walls of the glass. So one has not got an individual unless it maintains itself. The conatus is not derived from the existence of the individual but the latter is derived from the former which still needs to be proved. Still one could say that identifying something as an individual presupposes the existence of the conatus. One could say that unless there was teleological interplay among the parts of a thing it could not count as a thing: "If a number of individuals so concur in one action that together they are all the cause of one effect, I consider them all, to that extent, as one singular thing"(E2Def7). Once again this does not prove expansionary tendencies by an individual.

Another argument is stated by Hampshire (1987, p. 68): "The notion of conatus . . . is exactly the concept which biologists have often demanded as essential to the understanding of organic and living systems...he extends this principle...to the simplest mechanical systems as well as to organic and living systems". On this view, organisms have features whose function it is to preserve them and which adjust to the environment in ways that maintain them. Thus changes in a thing can be understood in terms of the conatus. This does provide some evidence for the conatus and it is essential for the interpretation of behaviour.

## **2. MORALITY AND THE CONATUS**

### **(Ch1, p. 17)**

Spinoza thinks moral virtues have no absolute worth, they are valuable only if they contribute to the power of the mind. We need the help of others to develop the intellect. If one pursues reason, one will want others to do so as they will not molest one out of envy and like minded people may be of some assistance in the pursuit of reason. Nothing is more useful than that others should live in accord with reason, so one will desire that others live in accord with reason. Spinoza states that "...more advantages than disadvantages follow from their forming a common society" (E4APPXIV). He also says that "...it is part of my happiness to take pains that many others may understand as I understand, so that their intellect and desire agree entirely with my intellect and

desire....it is necessary, first to understand as much of Nature as suffices for acquiring such a nature; next, to form a society of the kind that is desirable, so that as many as possible may attain it as easily and surely as possible" (TdIEs14 ).

Spinoza tries to show that freemen will not harm one another.

One argument is as follows:

the first premise is that if x and y are alike they will not be in conflict;

the second premise is that if x and y are rational they are alike;

the conclusion is that if x and y are rational they will not be in conflict.

I will start with the first premise: "Insofar as a thing agrees with our nature, it is necessarily good" (E4p31); "...the more a thing agrees with our nature, the more useful, or better, it is for us..." (E4p31c); "No thing can be evil through what it has in common with our nature..." (E4p30). This implies that if things are qualitatively alike then what helps one must help the other. If two people are physiologically identical, then a drug that helps one must help the other. As Spinoza maintains that I can't be harmful to myself in so far as I act according to my nature, so anything which is like me can't harm me; and whatever helps something like me is helpful to me, which implies that by helping those like me, I help myself. But Spinoza is wrong: if a food item is beneficial to all human beings then conflicts will still arise over its scarcity. In fact if people are dissimilar then they may pursue different objects; and may not come in conflict. Spinoza does acknowledge the problem of scarcity: "If we imagine that someone enjoys some thing that only one can possess, we shall strive to bring it about that he does not possess it" (E3p32). In support of premise one, I think one could say Spinoza is arguing that, qua being human, all people are alike. No one can do anything harmful to human nature in so far as one acts from human nature. In my view, this supports a notion that in so far as people are similar they will agree on general principles. It does not show that there will be no conflict in the application of these principles to situations. All that is established is that there may be a consensus on rules.

I shall now look at premise two: "Only insofar as men live according to the guidance of reason, must they always agree in nature" (E4p35). Spinoza is here stating that if people follow reason they will pursue ends which are in accord with their nature. The concealed premise would be that all human nature is alike, so to pursue ends in accord with this nature is to be like other people. We can argue against Spinoza in the following way. If we take one of these ends namely reason, one can see there could still be conflict. It is clear that access to the resources to develop knowledge could be limited. Also for some people to have the free time to advance their knowledge, others may have to forgo this in order to work to produce the necessary material goods. In support of premise two, one could say that if a whole society was to place the highest priority on the development of the intellect then a measure of agreement could be reached in many areas, e. g. the amount of resources to be devoted to education. But once again problems of scarcity intrude. As Broad (1930, p. 43) has pointed out, even though the highest good is non-competitive the lesser ones are not and even philosophers need food. The potential for conflict can't be eliminated. Also some people will have to be excluded from intellectual life to do the menial tasks. In support of Spinoza's view, one could cite the following: ethical persuasion depends upon finding common grounds for discussion. If your opponent can agree on a theory of human nature then it becomes easier to achieve agreement on what course of behaviour is appropriate, in the light of theory, to recommend.

Steinberg's (1984, p. 321-323) view is that in E4p35 Spinoza assumes that all men share a common nature and so far as they act to benefit themselves, their actions must be beneficial to other men. Since all men aim to benefit themselves, they cannot come in conflict with others. So the true interests of men coincide because their being is one. Proposition 30 makes two assertions: (a) nothing can be evil through that which it has in common with our nature; (b) in so far as a thing is evil to us it is contrary to us. The demonstration suggests that if X has some element A in common with our nature, then X can't be harmful in so far as we possess A. That is the element A in us can't suffer harm from X. So if X is rational like us then X can't harm rationality. The key is E3p4, as if a thing were evil to us through what it has in common with us, then we would be destroyed by an internal cause. According to Steinberg, if the argument is interpreted on nominalist lines, then to say something is in common means that X and Y have A and it does not follow that if we suffer harm from X, then we suffer harm from an internal cause. If X impairs our rational capacities it does not follow he is impairing his own; two things however alike are still two. So in order to make the

demonstration work, we must construe A in X and A in ourselves as absolutely identical. The A's must not be distinct. For free man X to destroy rationality in us is acting against the same in him; this would then not be possible. So free man X cannot harm us. For a person to do what is good for himself he must do what is good for him as a human being, i. e. what is good for his human nature. So when a person reasons truly about what he should do, in a given situation, he must consider the long term effects on him qua man. Reason prescribes that each person should do what is best for himself as a human being, but as a human being he is one with all other humans, so reason prescribes for each person that he does what is best for human nature in everyone. Spinoza is assuming that one person's human nature is not distinct from another. But what may be good to my human nature may not be good for yours. Despite this flaw there is a line of thought behind E4p35: 1. all men share a common nature in that the human nature of one person is absolutely indistinguishable from another; 2. no man, in so far as he acts from his nature alone, can do anything harmful to human nature in any man; 3. all men, in so far as their actions follow from common human nature, do what is good for one another; 4. in so far as men live according to the guidance of reason their actions follow from their common human nature; 5. in so far as men live according to the guidance of reason they do what is good for one another. Steinberg suggests that mankind is a whole whose parts are individual human beings. To say that all human beings share a common human nature is to say that they are each part of the individual which is mankind. So each person is governed by laws which constitute the nature of the whole. Steinberg says that to act against human laws is to act against yourself. So moral rules constitute the essence of mankind, i. e. the nature of mankind involves not being deceitful. Self preservation can lead to enlargement when we realise that what is real in us is what unites us to the whole.

This is an attractive argument as it fits in with the holistic approach I discussed in Chapter 3. Man has his being through a common nature and acting contrary to these laws is to act contrary to one's own nature. But this does not mean that we should only promote the whole as we are wholes as well as parts. In fact Spinoza's doctrine of the conatus implies an essence for each being and this still leaves the problem of a conflict between the individual and others.

According to the argument from equality, there is no relevant reason why a person should not desire for others the good he seeks himself. E4p72s seems to imply that like cases should be treated alike, unless there is a relevant difference. Also people will feel that like cases should be treated alike (E3p46 and Dem). According to Spinoza all men are identical in their general essence in so far as they are determined by Nature. This would seem to show that in so far as one is rational, one must be moral since to be otherwise will violate the principle of consistency. The good of one is so intertwined with others that egoistic motivation passes into concern for others. Wetlesen (1979, p. 240) says that this involves a regard for future generations as well. In answer to the question whether a man could save himself from death by treachery, Spinoza states that "If reason should recommend that, it would recommend it to all men" (E4p72s). This seems to imply that like cases should be treated alike. Consequently, as the essence of all men is the same, there is no reason just to help oneself and not others.

It will be said that it is also part of human nature to help other people. The moral person is not one who just abstains from immoral acts. He is also beneficent. Spinoza's free man cannot act in this way as it would involve a sacrifice of self-interest. However, Spinoza does not seem to agree: "The good which everyone who seeks virtue wants for himself, he also desires for other men" (E4p37). On the other hand, it is clear that the free man will place more emphasis on his own interest and will place a lower value on altruism than may be considered appropriate. It may also be difficult to see why he should help people who may be of no use to him. The view that one will want to help other people pursue knowledge, as this benefits oneself, is not entirely true as one needs some people to do the menial work. Despite this, Spinoza does say "Men still find from experience that by helping one another they can provide themselves much more easily with the things they require, and that only by joining forces can they avoid the dangers that threaten on all sides..." (E4p35s).

### **3. SPINOZA'S DEFINITION OF FREEDOM**

*(Ch1, p. 19)*

R. Scruton points out (1986, pp. 85-90) that Spinoza illegitimately applies concepts which are absolute, such as self-causation, to man when they can only be applied to God. Spinoza considered that all finite modes are dependent on other modes, and only Nature as a whole is not dependent on anything else. Scruton says Spinoza describes differences that are absolute as between God and man as differences of degree, so that man can be self-caused to some extent. Scruton is incorrect as we do refer to differences in the degree of freedom and there is no reason why God should not pertain to the upper limit. When we do have eternal ideas our mind is self caused with respect to them.

Delahunty (1985, p. 219) argues that E3d2 is consistent with saying that a neurotic's behaviour is free as is understood through his nature. Parkinson's (1975, p. 24) solution to this, which I accept, is that Spinoza defined man's nature in terms of rationality. To be free is for one's thought and action to be in accordance with one's nature as a rational being.

Bennett (1984, pp. 324-328) thinks there are two views of freedom in Spinoza's account. These have some parallel to the distinction I made in the thesis between absolute and relative freedom. (Except that Bennett's account of control makes no reference to beliefs being integrated into eternal principles). The first is a freedom of self sufficiency, where one is free if one is not determined by anything outside one's mind or body. Holding eternal ideas would exemplify freedom as they are self-explanatory and do not require reference to anything outside one's mind for their explanation. Holding empirical ideas would exemplify lack of freedom. One could come to grasp some of the ideas that explain them, but one would then have to grasp the causes of these ideas, and it was Spinoza's view that one could never hold in one's mind the infinite chain of causes of these ideas; one could never achieve self-causation with respect to these ideas.

The other view is a freedom of control. One is an adequate cause if certain elements in one are dominant, even if these elements have causes located outside one's mind. Thus if my behaviour is the result of reasons, then even if they have an empirical content I am still an adequate cause of my states, e. g. if a person considers that smoking is harmful and, in the light of this, overcomes his strong desire to smoke then his behaviour is under his control, even if he does not have a complete explanation for this belief. We have a loss of freedom without pretending that it involves causes from outside one's whole self. Bennett thinks that what Spinoza ought to mean in urging relative self-sufficiency is the value of making ourselves volitionally free, that is making the will the cause of our acts. He thinks that taking freedom in this sense abolishes most of the demonstrations in Ethics part 4 as these are based on reason as causal self-sufficiency. This leads him to conclude that one can't say why the passions make one unfree, as obsessions are within. This inconsistency can be removed, in my view, if we understand freedom as transcendence of spatio-temporal circumstances. We can achieve a transcendence through self-control and self-causation, of which freedom of control is one aspect but which does not represent full freedom. Bennetts problems stem from defining self-causation in terms of not being interfered with by things external to one's spatial envelope. I have taken the line that freedom is independence of particular spatio-temporal stimuli whether these are in or outside one's spatial envelope. Bennett's claim that there are two views of freedom is incorrect. There is one view which is that of independence, and control and self-sufficiency are different degrees of this.

### **4. OBJECT OF IDEA**

*(Ch2, p. 40)*

Spinoza says that all ideas agree with their objects: "The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things" (E2P7). The problem with this is that if 'true' means an idea's agreement with its object, then all ideas must be true. This problem can be solved in the following way. We can accept Parkinson's (1978, p. 38-40) view that the claim that a true idea must agree with its ideatum has two senses. 1. In E2p13 Spinoza says that the object of the idea that constitutes a human mind is a body. So for every idea I have, there is a body in a certain state. So in one sense



'idea of' means the expression in the attribute of thought of that of which the body is the expression in the attribute of extension. 2. The object of idea in E2p49 means judging that a thing has such and such nature. This is supported by D. Radner (1971, pp. 352-353), who says the phrase 'that of which it is the idea' may refer to the object of the idea or that which is represented by the idea. Spinoza considers ideas true or false with what they represent. An idea is a judgement that x is the case and is true where x is the case. A true idea of x is one which represents x as it is in itself. A false idea of x represents x but not as it is in itself. The relation between the idea and its object is explicated in terms of the distinction between objective and formal reality. A thing has formal reality in so far as it exists in itself and objective reality in so far as it is thought of. (Here Spinoza is using the term 'objective' in a sense different to our own and how it is intended in this thesis). If I am thinking of a Euclidean triangle, whose internal angles are not equal to two right angles, then the idea in my mind does not agree with or represent a Euclidean triangle. This, then, shows that Spinoza's definition of truth is consistent with his view on the relation between ideas and their objects.

## **5. SCEPTICISM**

*(Ch2, p. 40)*

Spinoza rejects scepticism as we can pass from the adequacy of an idea to a conclusion that things in the world are as the idea represents them: "...whether we consider nature under the attribute of Extension or under the attribute of Thought...we shall find one and the same order, or one and the same connection of causes..."(E2P7S). The principle may also be understood as a postulate of representationalism, i. e. not as a relation between mind and body but mind and world: "I recognise no other difference between a true and an adequate idea than that the word true refers only to the agreement of the idea with its ideatum, while the word adequate refers to the nature of the idea in itself; so that there is really no difference between a true and an adequate idea except this extrinsic relation" (EP LX). E2 p7 mediates the passage from ideas to the world, from thought to things. Spinoza must prove that ideas mirror the world. The proof of E2p7 can only be on the assumption that it is stating causal correspondence. X's knowledge that p depends on his knowledge that q. From this x's idea that p depends on his idea that q. This is expressed as x's idea that p is caused by his idea that q. What this asserts is that the relation which holds between states q and p also holds between the ideas of the states. The order and connection of things is mirrored by the order and connection of ideas, i. e. E2p7. This is how one can see the proof.

The problem with this proof is as follows: when one is thinking of something, one deduces it from something else, e. g. motion and rest from extension, but it does not follow that the successive mental states are related in the same manner; so E2p7 is not proved. Why should a claim about the dependence of thought of effect on cause have any relevance to causal sequencing of ideas? We have one idea producing another why should this reflect a real ordering in the world? That one passes from one idea to another in a deductive chain does not show the world is like that. Bennett says E2p7d must be taken as mental. If x causes y then a mental item related to both must be connected in the same way. We must take 1a4 psychologically to make it support parallelism. Bennett states that parallelism rest on 2p3 which asserts the existence of a mental item corresponding to every physical item and E1a4 which implies that if x causes y and the idea of x exists then idea y exists. So the order of our thoughts is mapped onto the actual order of reality.

## **6. PROOF OF SUFFICIENT REASON**

*(Ch2, p. 40)*

To know God is to know that there is an efficient and formal cause for everything: "For each thing there must be assigned a cause, or reason, as much for its existence as for its non-existence" (E1p11). We can assume that all of Nature is intelligible, even though we may not be able to discover in a particular case what the cause is. Taking a miracle to be that which cannot be explained,

Spinoza says that "From a miracle or a phenomenon which we cannot understand, we can gain no knowledge of God's essence, or existence, or indeed anything about God or nature" (TPT VI, 85). He also says: "If, therefore, events are found in the Bible which we cannot refer to their cause...we must not come to a stand but assuredly believe that whatever did really happen happened naturally" (TPT VI, 90). Spinoza's proof of the principle of sufficient reason is as follows: "If someone should wish to doubt whether something can come from nothing, he will at the same time be able to doubt whether we exist when we think. For if I affirm something of nothing-viz that it can be the cause of something-I shall be able at the same time, with the same right, to affirm thought of nothing, and to say that I am nothing when I think. But since I cannot do that, it will be impossible for me to think that something may come from nothing"(PP.1p4). This proof does not succeed as it assumes what is to be proved that there is a cause for everything. Despite this lack of proof, it remains a central axiom in Spinoza's philosophy that one can explicate the nature of all phenomena as well as accounting for the existence of everything. From which it follows that, in principle, there is no reason why education should not succeed in uncovering all the features of nature. We should remember that freedom is an exercise concept, so the more true ideas we can form the freer we become.

## **7. NECESSITY**

### **(Ch1, p.28)-DETERMINISM**

Spinoza's determinism follows from his explanatory rationalism: there is an explanation for all things being as they are. If what is cited as the explanation is compatible with the state of affairs being other than it is then one has not explained that state. If one explains P possessing Q, then the explanation must show why P has Q, rather than not Q. If the explanation is consistent with it having Q or not Q, then one has not explained it having Q. Only if Q must be the case given P, has one explained Q.

There is another source of determinism. Nature as cause means that reality is active. A creative agency is inherent in its nature. Whether as substance or mode, existence involves the stepping forth of this power. Parkinson (1964, 69) says that Spinoza fails to deduce the finite modes from substance, but this is because he fails to see that it is active and necessarily expresses itself. Hume does not think the effect follows from the cause; it merely succeeds it. But Spinoza conceives of cause as action, an actualisation of potency. The cause is the power and the effect its actualisation. So to understand reality as cause is to grasp it as active power of acting. Causality carries the notion of active production. X can't be a cause if it does not produce the effect.

### **(Ch5, p. 127) (Ch2, p. 51)-NECESSITARIANISM**

It is said that Spinoza is also putting forward a stronger thesis than determinism which is necessitarianism. The former asserts that given x then y must follow. Things are only necessary in relation to their cause. Given certain conditions there will be x. Without them there will be no x. Necessitarianism asserts that the actual order is the only logically possible order. So it is not just that, given certain conditions, a person had to be short-sighted but there is no world in which he could have had any other state. This does not follow from determinism, as we can have an infinite series of causes which are dependent on others, and since a change in one will produce a change in another it is conceivable that the order of causes could be other than it is. But to think that a different order was possible, is to think that its ground, namely God could be other and this is not conceivable, otherwise two substances will exist: hence Spinoza's necessitarianism. Now if 'Spinoza had dark hair' is understood in terms of E1p33, then his having dark hair would be true in all possible worlds as there cannot be any change in conditions that could alter this fact. This dissolves the distinction between essential and accidental qualities. The latter resting on the idea that these are qualities which one might not have had, if other conditions had been different. This is consistent with a kind of necessity where x must be so given certain conditions. This is a weaker form of necessity than in E1p33 and Spinoza's doctrine is not consistent on this matter. His view that one can alter one's passive qualities is also predicated on a view that these qualities might not be as they are if other conditions were different. Also this entails that the essence of finite things involves their

existence which contradicts Spinoza's view. This is because, given that I exist, my non-existence could not be conceivable. So to save Spinoza from himself, we may say he is just committed to determinism (Matson 1977 p. 80). But there may not be an inconsistency in his thought. We can take E1p33 to be saying that just the causal laws are absolutely necessary; not all truths (Friedman 1977, p. 62). Finite things could have been produced differently had they had different causes. There are limits, as they must be consistent with their essences which could not be different. They are logically constrained by their essence. On the other hand, Bennett does show us that a number of Spinoza's statements can only be understood to be asserting necessitarianism (1984 p. 122); Spinoza asserting that Nature as a whole must be necessary. I conclude that whichever interpretation one places on Spinoza's view, it will be inconsistent with his other doctrines. Spinoza's stronger form of necessity is based on the view that if one says that x might have taken place, if the conditions had been different, then one is admitting the existence of other possible worlds; e. g. one in which x did not occur, and this would imply that there is some imperfection in God as there are unactualised possibilities. But much of his philosophy assumes that the present world is not the only possible one and, as Matson argues, one has to reject Spinoza's necessitarianism, if one is to make sense of his other doctrines, e.g. the ability to modify one's states.

### (Ch2, p. 51) (Ch1, p. 24)-LOGICAL NECESSITY

Spinoza's view is that there are features of Nature, which are true in all possible worlds as they are logically necessary. By understanding these, we attain a state that is not dependent on anything else and hence we are free. This doctrine of logical necessity derives from Spinoza's explanatory rationalism (Bennett 1984 pp. 31-32). If we adduce a causal law, according to which F events cause G events, then we must say why the law is true. If it is not absolutely necessary that F events are followed by G events, then it is legitimate to ask why F-G sequence happen. If we refer to some deeper law then the question arises again. This is how the explanatory rationalist is pushed towards causal rationalism. A distinction can be made between logical and causal necessity. In the former case, something is logically necessary if its denial would involve a contradiction. Something is causally necessary if its denial is impossible given its conditions. According to Delahunty (1985, p. 164), it is not clear whether Spinoza accepts both kinds of necessity. He cites S. Clarke as claiming that Spinoza "must affirm that it is in itself and in terms a contradiction for anything to be or be imagined in any respect otherwise than it now is" (1985, p164). Friedman (1997, pp. 60-61) cites E1p33s1 in support of his view that Spinoza admits both kinds of necessity: "A things existence follows necessarily either from its essence. . or from a given efficient cause. And a thing is called impossible from these same causes-viz. either because its essence or definition involves a contradiction or because there is no external cause which has been determined to produce such a thing".

## 8. ETERNITY

### (Ch2, p. 60)

One interpretation sees it as timelessness: to say something is eternal is not to say it is everlasting. It is to say that temporal predicates can't apply to it. It is meaningless to conceive Nature as beginning to exist or ceasing to exist. But this would not represent a further advance on what we have considered, as this conception is what we have shown to be involved in forming true ideas.

Another interpretation sees it as sempiternity. This would involve attributing everlasting existence to the mind. Here the mind transcends local conditions through being everlasting. If this interpretation were correct then this would represent an advance. Kneale (1979, pp. 38- 40) says that Spinoza is advocating personal survival after death. This would be a different form of transcendence to the one associated with a grasp of timeless truths. According to Kneale (1979, p. 227), one can still hold that timeless truths hold for all times. She thinks that in Book 1 of the Ethics, Spinoza starts with timelessness, but in Book 5 he moves to sempiternity. She says that to say that mathematical truths are timeless, is to say that there is no point in asking when 2 and 2 are 4 as there is in asking when roses are in bloom. But this does not mean that it is not the case that 2 and 2 are 4 today or tomorrow. Timelessness is lack of limitation of existence in time, it is not failure to exist at all times.

Now it is said that if it is pointless to utter a sentence; it is meaningless. But, although it is not socially correct to say that  $2+2=4$  yesterday it is not meaningless. Kneale says there is a difference between a timelessly true and necessarily true proposition. The proposition there are exactly  $n$  epicurian atoms would be timelessly true; but not necessarily true. But propositions about mathematical objects are necessarily true. So necessity entails sempiternity but not vice versa. Kneale's view is difficult to sustain. Delahunty (1985 p. 292) says that if eternity is continuing for all time then why can't we have some recollection of it before we existed? Spinoza says we do not. In support of Kneale, Spinoza seems to relate eternity to duration (E5p23). But Spinoza's view is that the eternal life is not a continuance in existence, but a manner of existence. Something which can be realised here and now. This is the view supported in this thesis. Spinoza is not supporting freedom as being able to transcend time by living for ever. Immortality can't be salvaged from Spinoza's thought.

Donagan (1979, p. 243) says that eternity is omni-temporal existence, i. e. at all moments in the passage of time. In letter XII to Meyer, Spinoza describes eternity as infinite enjoyment of existing. Spinoza does say that an infinite thing must always exist (E2p11Dem). So eternity is necessary continuation of existing. This would seem to support Kneale's view. Donagan (1979, p. 247) says that E5p23 is an embarrassment, as Spinoza says that the mind can't be destroyed with the body but something of it remains which is eternal. The problem is that this conflicts with his view that for every mental event there is a physical event that expresses the same event. The problem is that if mind and body are a reflection of the same thing then how can one exist when the other has perished? Donagan's (1979, pp. 254-258) answer is as follows: the idea in Nature is that of the essence of a body. To speak of the actual essence is to speak of a formal essence actualised. Spinoza equates the eternal part of the mind with an idea expressing the essence of a particular body. Formal essence has no implication of its being actual. Spinoza in E2p8 says that ideas of formal essences are in Nature. There are infinite possible essences contained in the attribute. The infinite mode of thought must contain an actual idea of the formal essence of every existent and non-existent body. When a living human body is destroyed, the corresponding mind perishes but the formal essence is part of the infinite idea of Nature. Therefore, the part of a man's mind which consists in the idea of the formal essence of his body must be eternal. It must have pre-existed his body and can't be destroyed with it. But this solution does not mean that we are everlasting qua minds but that a part of the mind contains an idea that is everlasting. In so far as we know Nature, we can become free in this respect.

## **9. GOD'S EXISTENCE**

### **(Ch2, p. 40)**

Spinoza makes independence one defining feature of God and thus Nature as a whole: "By God I understand a being absolutely infinite, i. e, a substance consisting of an infinity of attributes, of which each one expresses an eternal and infinite essence"[E1D6 ]; "By substance I understand what is in itself and is conceived through itself, i.e. that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing, from which it must be formed"(E1D3). Spinoza's proof that God or Nature as a whole exists can be understood to establish that there is an objective reality, This rejects an extreme idealism which maintains there is no reality beyond our particular conceptions. I will now turn to Spinoza's proofs. The conclusion that substance exists is reached by stages. Spinoza is trying to move from the essence of God to its existence. In E1p11 the first proof refers to p7Dem: "A Substance cannot be produced by anything else; therefore it will be the cause of itself, i. e. (byD1), its essence necessarily involves existence, or it pertains to its nature to exist. "(E1p7). The basis of this is that substance can't be produced by anything external; so it must be its own cause. But why not say that because substance can't be produced by anything else it can't exist? Spinoza seems to be assuming it does exist and then says that if it can't be produced by anything external it must be self-caused. But this assumes what has to be proved. At the most Spinoza has proved that if a substance exists it must be self-caused, which is less than Spinoza wants.

I will now look at the first proof of E1p11 in more detail. This is the claim: a substance can't be caused by another, and as there is a cause for all it must be self caused, i. e. exist. So one substance must exist. One must first establish that no substance is produced by another. 1.Substances with different attributes have nothing in common. This is because a substance's properties are modes of

its principle property or attribute. So if two substances have different attributes they will have different modes. Something which is extended will have none of the modes of thought, i. e. no body qua body can have feelings. 2. Two things which have nothing in common can't act upon each other. 3. So if two substances differ in attributes then one can't produce the other. 4. Why will 2 substances always differ and thus establishing that one can't produce the other? The line of reasoning seems to be that if they have the same attribute they will be the same substance. 5. Why can't two things with the same attribute be distinguished by their affections, and yet be substances? X and y have the same attribute and can act on one another but Spinoza says that in this case they can't be substances. If we look at the wax argument in Descartes, we see that in the end wax is essentially extended and the same goes for all other bodies. So all things are substantially the same. So things are not distinct and so are not different substances. So if x and y are distinct substances, they must have different attributes - F, G, and as nothing G can be caused by anything F, so two substances can't affect each other. 6. A substance can't be produced by a mode as according to the principle of perfection modes can't produce substance. 7. Now if a substance can't be caused by any thing and can't be uncaused, as there is a cause for everything it must be self caused. But, I contend, this does not prove that a substance does exist only that if it does then it is self-caused. So Spinoza does not show that substance exists. At the most Spinoza has only shown, that if it exists, it must be self-caused.

According to Bennett (1984, p. 73), as everything has a cause no substance has an external cause so it must be self-caused. But self-causation does not explain why the whole thing had to happen. Bennett locates the source of Spinoza's error in the equation of causal with logical necessity. Now for the causal rationalist x causes its own existence = x logically necessitates it. Its own nature explains its existence. Spinoza moves from causal to logical necessity, i. e. that x is self-caused means it can't be conceived except as existing; so a substance necessarily exists.

The second proof in E1p11 is as follows: if God does not exist there must be a cause for this; it can't lie with a different substance for the reason explained in connection with the first proof and can't be within substance. It would appear that the third and fourth proof are designed to show why there can't be an internal cause for the non existence of a substance.

The third proof is that inability to exist is impotence and ability to exist power. If only finite things exist then finite things are more powerful than the infinite, so if anything exists Substance does.

The fourth says that, since ability to exist is power, it follows that the more reality belongs to a thing the greater its power of existence. So God has an infinite power of existence. Joachim (1901, p. 45) says that all four are based on one principle: once grant anything is actual then God is actual. Joachim thinks the movement is from finite to what encompasses it. What is needed is seeing the force of the power argument. For Spinoza ability to exist is power. Existence is not just added to essence. It is the actualisation of power. Spinoza says that if we exist, a self-caused substance must exist as essence is active power and existence is the actualisation of that power.

## **10.UNIFIED WHOLE**

### **(Ch3, p. 62)**

Spinoza tries to prove that Nature as a whole is the one and only substance and all things are modes of this substance. The idea behind the demonstration of E1p14 is as follows: P1. there must be a substance which has infinite attributes; P2. there can't be two with the same attribute; the conclusion is that there can only be one substance. Suppose we accept P1. The conclusion turns on P2. If it is true then, given there is a substance with all the attributes, there can't be another one as it would have an attribute which the other has and there could not be a distinct substance: "In Nature there cannot be two or more substances of the same nature or attribute" (E1p5). The demonstration begins with citing E1p4, namely that if there were two distinct substances they would have to be distinguished by differences in their attributes or affections. Now since we are discussing substances with the same attribute we can't use the attribute to distinguish them. Now a distinction between two bodies can't be based on modes as they are peripheral. We can't identify wax by its colour. So, if there is an extended substance there must be just one.

What about a plurality of substances with different attributes? As no substance can be finite, then it must be infinite and have infinite attributes. The reason is as follows: if it is finite it is limited by something of the same nature but this contradicts the principle that there can't be more than one substance with the same attribute. So it must be infinite in this sense of non finite. But, by way of objection to Spinoza, we could say that even if substance is infinite there could be other realities outside this, e. g. Descartes' extended substance is not limited by anything, but does not constitute all reality as there is the attribute of Thought as well. So is the existing substance absolutely infinite, i. e. all-inclusive? Spinoza would reply in the affirmative: a substance possesses all the attributes, and as two substances can't have the same attribute there can only be one substance(E1p14). The proofs of God's existence in E1p11 can be also taken as proofs of the existence of just one substance.

## **11.FINITE MODE AS PART OF SUBSTANCE**

*(Ch3, p. 62)*

According to Bennett (1984, pp. 92-96), space can be viewed in regions. This does not threaten Spinoza's view, as region presupposes space. One can't think of spatial region without space. Any division of space into regions is arbitrary, since they can be as small or large as you like. Bennett (1984, p. 96) raises the following problems over this conception: suppose you say that this pebble is solid. This could mean this region of space is solid thus giving to a region the status of substance. But we can replace 'some regions are f' by 'space is f somewhere', i.e. space is solid. On annihilation the following can be understood: if B lies between A and C and B goes, then this is a qualitative change in something that stayed in existence throughout. It is a region altering. This is the kind of account one can put forward of how finite objects relate to Nature qua naturans. There is a problem in any account that postulates an underlying unity, of characterising how the parts relate to that which they have in common.

To understand all there is in terms of substance is to understand it as having parts, as substance is that in terms of which everything else is explained. Curley (1969, p. 37) denies that the relation of particular things to God was that of subject predicate. On his view, it is not the inherence of property in a subject that characterises the substance mode relation but that of cause to effect. Still the view of subject predicate is possible. Ordinary objects can be viewed as smaller or larger portions of one continuous object. So one extended being is qualified in certain ways at certain times and places. To say that the piece of wax is a mode of the one substance is to say that this extended thing has certain properties at certain places and times. Curley (1969, p. 37) does not think this gives one a reasonable account of the relation between substance and mode: one can't predicate size and shape of God. Also, following this line of thought, we can't deny God changes. When wax changes the one extended thing has one property then another one. Spinoza will not allow that God can change. Also, how can the infinite mode of motion and rest be predicable of God? It must be predicable of the extended thing as a whole without spatial or temporal qualification since they are infinite and eternal. But only things with a location in space can be said to move or not move. Space as the whole universe does not have location in space. It is unhelpful to think of the relation between mode and substance as a matter of a property inhering in a thing. Now we can form no clear concept of substance in abstraction from its attributes. What is it for a mode to express an attribute? We must think of extension as involving certain laws. We must think of the infinite modes of extension and particular bodies as following from those laws. Bennett says there are two problems in seeing things as modes. First, if I say the puddle is slimy (1984 p. 96) then I am implying that God is; but in reply this could just mean that a certain region of space is slimy. Second, to say there are wet things and unwet things is to attribute to God contradictory things, if all predications are of God; but in reply one can say that things are wet here and unwet there.

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